

Barthold Heinrich Brockes, a Transmitter of
Germinal Ideas in his Irdisches Vergnügen in
Gott

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SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

What we read about Barthold Heinrich Brockes leaves us with a confusing and contradictory picture.

CHAPTER I

The sources of Brockes' Irdisches Vergnügen have not been adequately investigated, therefore conclusions drawn from his work about his religion and his attitude to nature are suspect, especially since he sometimes used foreign material without acknowledgment.

CHAPTER II

Brockes' scientific poems read like versified paraphrases of the work of some of the scientists of the Royal Society and of the Boyle lecturers who preached sermons based on their investigations. Their aim, the glorification of God through the study of his creation, is also Brockes' aim, and their theological interpolations are similar to his.

CHAPTER III

The theological and philosophical ideas of this group of writers go back to the great philosophers and theologians of the past. Cicero and Galen transmitted much of this material. Brockes uses it as motifs in his poetry. The topoi of the book of nature and the artisan God express the relationship of the Creator to creation. By contemplating God's handiwork man can raise himself to a knowledge of God. Sometimes he is optimistic about this quest, but sometimes he feels that knowledge is restricted

to the afterlife. God is active in creation. A passive God would be the God of "atheism." Newton's theory of gravity and other suitable evidence is given for God's continuous presence in creation.

CHAPTER IV

Most of these ideas are also expressed in the writings of Brockes, Du Bartas, Blackmore, Thomson and several others. The literary tradition goes back to Genesis and the hexaemera of the Church Fathers. Motifs are also taken from Lucretius and Virgil.

CHAPTER V

In several of his poems Brockes clearly opposes the tendency to deify nature, yet he often writes about a Natura figure or spirit of nature who is responsible for plant growth, the changing seasons, instinct in the animal world and many other mysterious processes. These ideas are found in the work of the Cambridge Platonists and those who were influenced by them. Contemplation of space and the thought of God's infinity produce a kind of religious ecstasy. This is also in the work of Norris, Traherne and More. Brockes writes in the hymnic manner of Theocles' apostrophes to various natural phenomena in Shaftesbury's Moralists.

CHAPTER VI

Certain aspects of Longinus' theory of the sublime are transformed in the writings of Dennis, Addison, Shaftesbury and Brockes into an experience in which the imagination (or reason) capitulates in the presence of

something beyond its capacity. In this state man is raised to thoughts of God. Vast expanses (sky, sea, mountains, forests), wild natural forces (storms and earthquakes) produce a pleasing kind of horror. Brockes finds material of this kind in Burnet's Sacred Theory of the Earth.

CHAPTER VII

Brockes' sources are unexplored. Pope's influence has been exaggerated. Brockes translated or adapted material from many other writers such as Genest, La Motte, Voltaire, Shaftesbury, Sarasa and others.

CHAPTER VIII

Brockes is considered as an unimaginative descriptive poet. He is said to depict the quiet idyllic landscape. But Brockes' best poems are the products of his imagination in conformity with Addison's theories of the imagination. He perceives nature by means of his senses but his knowledge of scientific theories (Locke, Newton and the Royal Society) makes him see things in a certain way. His imagination carries him beyond the actual object of description to a higher kind of artistic reality.

CHAPTER IX

The Irdisches Vergnügen is full of hymns and hymnic passages. Brockes also translated hymns by other writers. The traditional hymn form is used, but is enriched by the motifs which we have been studying. The transformation of Psalm 148 into Milton's "Morning hymn" and Thomson's "Hymn to the Seasons" illustrates this. The pagan hymn to the

sun develops in the same way. Brockes and Thomson gather together material from widely differing sources in their hymns.

CHAPTER X

Brockes' Irdisches Vergnügen is a mystery as it has no artistic unity. Banalities alternate with poems of near genius. His successes could be ascribed to the way in which his imagination adapts and varies material gathered from a wide variety of sources.

PREFACE

Like many others nurtured on histories of literature and university lectures I was quite ignorant of the work of Barthold Heinrich Brookes. At the University of Cologne I had to write a paper on his religious language for Professor Paul Böckmann's Oberseminar. For this purpose I had access to the Irdisches Vergnügen for the first time and soon became aware of problems which would have to be investigated beforehand. The subsequent search for favourable research conditions lasted for several years and ended in Edinburgh where Professor Eudo Mason accepted me as a candidate for the Ph.D.

The work advanced considerably with the help of the courteous staff of the library of the University of Illinois and the excellent facilities of that library. I am also grateful to other librarians, the inter-library loan departments of the University of Minnesota and the University of Edinburgh, the National Library of Scotland and the British Museum Library. I am also grateful to Professor Edwin Menze, Chairman of the German Department of the University of Minnesota for reducing my teaching load in the interests of my work. I could not have survived the crises which arose during the preparation of the manuscript without the help of Gisela Beck and my sister, Mrs Edith Henderson. The much-needed impetus to the task

of writing was derived from the interest which Professor Mason showed in the project. I am also deeply grateful to him for the time which he devoted to my work and the useful suggestions and criticism which he offered.

The manuscript has been prepared according to the system laid down by the Modern Language Association of America. This accounts for some practices, especially in matters of punctuation, which might seem odd to British eyes. However, I modified their demand for the repetition of full bibliographical details in each new chapter by abbreviating those books which were quoted most frequently.

Where possible, I have quoted from the Hagedorn and Wilckens selection from the first five volumes of Brockes' Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott since it has recently been reprinted and is accessible (see Abbreviations--Metzler). It is close enough to the first editions for our purposes. The variations are in punctuation and spelling. This is also true of the Tübingen editions. The following are typical: merken=mercken; Körper=Cörper; Schöpfer=Schöpffer; wirklich=würcklich; Glanz=Glantz.

ABBREVIATIONS

- ASNS = Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen (Braunschweig).
- Bentley = Richard Bentley, Boyle Lectures (London, 1693).
- Burnet = Thomas Burnet, The Sacred Theory of the Earth... 6th ed. (London, 1726).
- JEGP = Journal of English and Germanic Philology (Urbana, Ill.).
- Koyré = Alexandre Koyré, From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe (Baltimore, 1957).
- Kupffer = Imogen Kupffer, Das Irdische Vergnügen in Gott von B.H.Brockes. Eine Untersuchung zu Wesen und Entwicklung der Naturlyrik. Unpublished thesis (Göttingen, 1956).
- La Sepmaine = Guillaume de Saluste Sieur Du Bartas, La Sepmaine ou Creation du Monde in Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie, 107. Heft: Die Schöpfungswoche des Du Bartas I. Kritischer Text der Genfer Ausgabe von 1581, ed. Kurt Reichenberger (Tübingen, 1963).
- Lovejoy = Arthur O. Lovejoy, The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea (New York, 1960).
- McKillop = Alan Dugald McKillop, The Background of Thomson's Seasons (Minneapolis, 1942).
- Metzler = Barthold Heinrich Brockes, Auszug der vornehmsten Gedichte aus dem Irdischen Vergnügen in Gott, Faksimiledruck nach der Ausgabe von 1738 mit einem Nachwort von Dietrich Bode. Reihe Texte des 18. Jahrhunderts, ed. Paul Böckmann (Stuttgart, 1965).
- MLN = Modern Language Notes (Baltimore).
- Mountain Gloom = Marjorie Hope Nicolson, Mountain Gloom and Mountain Glory: The Development of the Aesthetics of the Infinite (New York, 1963).
- Paradise Lost = The Poetical Works of John Milton, ed. Helen Darbishire. 2 vols. (Oxford, 1961).
- Physico-Theology = William Derham, Physico-Theology: or, a Demonstration of the being and attributes of God, from his works of creation... 8th ed. (London, 1732).
- Pluche = Noël Antoine Pluche, Le Spectacle de la Nature ou Entretiens sur les particularités de l'histoire naturelle. vols. I-IV (Paris, 1732-1739).
- PMLA = Publications of the Modern Language Association of America (Menasha, Wisc.).
- Seasons = James Thomson, The Seasons and The Castle of Indolence, ed. J. Logie Robertson (Oxford, 1891).
- Shaftesbury's Moralists = Anthony Ashley Cooper Earl of Shaftesbury, Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times, ed. John M. Robertson. 2 vols. (London, 1900).

INTRODUCTION

The neglect of the early eighteenth century by research is quite astounding. The impression given by histories of literature is that nothing much happened before 1750. Yet the early eighteenth century is the germinating period of the masterpieces to come. Then and even at the end of the seventeenth century the ideas, feelings, and language which were to reach full maturity at the end of the century may be profitably studied in their early growth. In most disciplines scholars start with the origins of things yet Barthold Heinrich Brockes, an innovator in the field of German poetry, is still misrepresented.

The general picture¹ of Brockes is that of a pious, self-satisfied, prosperous bourgeois sitting in his garden meticulously describing each leaf and each stamen of each flower, or cataloguing spinach and other useful vegetables in inferior verse for the glory of God.² Brockes' practice of faithfully recording objective reality,³ which provokes such gentle mockery, is generally regarded ne-

¹What I am attempting to do is to reconstruct the type of general picture that non-specialists have of Brockes, a picture found in various degrees of focus. I am aware that in so doing I am running the risk of misrepresenting authorities by referring to them out of context. To counteract this danger I propose to review them more accurately in a bibliographic section.

²August Closs, The Genius of the German Lyric (London, 1962), p. 111 discussing Brockes' "Willkommen liebster Mai, wie lieblich und wie schön" in which "those useful vegetables, spinach, asparagus, hops and lettuce are catalogued for the glory of God."

³Gerhard Fricke, Geschichte der deutschen Dichtung (Tübingen, 1949), pp. 110-111 emphasizes this.

theologischer Beweis," given to Brockes' nature poetry by Strauß¹ in 1876 and passed on from book to book, has been accepted so uncritically. Although progress has been made recently and Brockes has been accorded a place in anthologies, we are still reminded that the weary repetition of the teleological idea mars his work.²

On the other hand, it was Brockes' character as revealed in his writings and his autobiography which was the obstacle to the fair evaluation of his poetry, for, as Hettner asks, „Was kann aus so platter Philisterseele Hohes kommen?"³ Recently, Professor Jantz has attempted to salvage Brockes' reputation as a poet: "Again and again one sensitive reader after the other discovers for himself how very good Brockes really is and is indignant at the critical neglect that has been his reward."⁴

But this picture of Brockes' character as "eine äußerst prosaische und spießbürgerliche Natur"⁵ raises problems. „Aber Brockes war es in der Tat auch nicht gegeben, Unglück tief zu empfinden," writes Ermatinger.⁶

¹David Friedrich Strauß, Gesammelte Schriften (Bonn, 1876).

²Jethro Bithell, An Anthology of German Poetry 1730-1830 (London, 1957), Introduction p. xv.

³Hermann Hettner, Geschichte der deutschen Literatur im achtzehnten Jahrhundert, 4th ed. (Braunschweig, 1893), Bk. I, p. 309.

⁴Harold Jantz, "Brockes' Poetic Apprenticeship," MLN, LXXVII (1962), 440.

⁵Hettner, op.cit., p. 307.

⁶Ermatinger, op.cit., p. 61.

Yet Grabert¹ talks of "empfindungsvolle Zartheit," Rose² of "a strong emotional life" and Pfund³ of "ein überquellendes Gefühl der Gottheit gegenüber."

It is only when Brockes' work is compared to what went before him in German literature that the picture comes a little more into focus. Even those who have a negative attitude to him⁴ are forced to admit, almost reluctantly, that he brought something new to German literature. This point we would consider to be a central one to be emphasized in any discussion of Brockes in a history of German literature; yet more often than not it is thrown in as an afterthought following a certain amount of negative criticism. Even then, the nature of Brockes' innovations is seldom explained. Generally speaking, the consensus is that it was a new attitude to nature⁵ and, while

¹W.G. Grabert, Geschichte der deutschen Literatur, 3rd ed. (München, 1957), p. 144.

²Ernst Rose, A History of German Literature (New York, 1960), p. 140.

³Harry W. Pfund, Studien zu Wort und Stil bei Brockes (New York, 1935), p. 25.

⁴Ermatinger, op.cit., p. 64 -- "Entdeckung der Schönheit der diesseitigen Welt." Hettner, op.cit., p. 306 -- "Begründer einer neuen literarischen Epoche."

⁵Notes by Dietrich Bode in Barthold Heinrich Brockes, Auszug der vornehmsten Gedichte aus dem Irdischen Vergnügen in Gott, Faksimiledruck nach der Ausgabe von 1738. (Reihe Texte des 18. Jahrhunderts, Stuttgart, 1965). This book will be referred to subsequently as Metzler which is the name of the publisher. "Ansatz einer Naturdichtung" Fricke, op.cit., p. 111 -- "Welt...in ihrer Fülle...entdeckt." Ludwig Fulda, DNL, XXXIX, 283 -- "Neuentdeckung der Natur." Benz, op.cit., p. 291 -- "Erhebung durch eine neue künstlerische Schau" and p. 364 "innige Naturanschauung." Fritz Martini, Deutsche Literaturgeschichte von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart (Stuttgart, 1949), p. 171 -- "ein neues Naturgefühl."

this seems fairly acceptable on the face of it, one finds on examination, such variation in the connotation of the word nature that antithetical statements shelter under it. At one end of the scale nature is close to realism while at the other it approaches what is loosely called romanticism.

Nothing very precise emerges from all these impressions of Brockes except that he has been neglected, perhaps because he has not been considered worth studying. This arises from the tendency to stand in the twentieth century and look back when evaluating his poetry. By this standard Brockes is certainly not a great poet. Although he is gradually receiving credit for his new attitude to nature, the same mistake is still being made. He is being judged by a vague and highly ambiguous conception of nature poetry which arose long after Brockes. Consequently those poems which fit this conception, such as the famous "Kirschblüte bei der Nacht" receive attention while all the others are rejected. Brockes can only be correctly understood and his gift to German literature adequately assessed, if he is placed in his eighteenth-century context.

CHAPTER I

THE SOURCE LACUNA

Emil Ermatinger has not a very high opinion of Brockes' poetic ability. To a large extent this view seems to be based on the superficiality of his autobiography. Consequently, while he conjectures that Brockes would have been enchanted by a passage which he quotes from Shaftesbury's Moralists, he does not consider him capable of reaching such heights: „Es fehlte ihm durchaus die Schwungkraft, die Shaftesburys Geist auf mächtigen Flügeln durch die Räume der Welt trug. Er blieb immer trippelnd, lustwandelnd auf der Erde stehen und schaute von da andächtigen Blickes zum Himmel auf.“¹ Alois Brandl holds the opposite view. He finds that Brockes, through James Thomson, the poet of the Seasons, has managed to transcend his habitual lifeless descriptions:

Von Thomson lernte er die verschiedenen Jahreszeiten mit charakteristischeren Zügen schildern und statt der toten Beschreibung, in die er mehr und mehr verfallen war, wieder das Leben der Natur und ihrer Bewohner erzählen. Die Empfindsamkeit, mit der er so gern das einzelne und kleine beschaute, wich vor der Rücksicht auf das ganze und große, die Ideen der Vergänglichkeit, Unsterblichkeit und besonders der Liebe erfüllen seine Naturbetrachtung, und mit kühnere Gedankenschwünge als je ruft er aus:

'Glorwürdig' herrliche Natur! O! die du über alles schön,
Und über alles gütig bist; die alles liebet, alles nähret!
Die über alles ehrwürdig und über alles liebenswerth;
Ja, die selbst göttlich, da in ihr der Gottheit Wesen
Selbst zu sehen.'²

¹Emil Ermatinger, Deutsche Dichter 1700-1900 (Bonn, 1948), p. 60.

²Alois Brandl, B.H. Brockes (Innsbruck, 1878), p. 99.

This poem is indeed written in the idiom of enthusiasm and Brockes certainly manages to rise above the earth despite Ermatinger's contention.

It is interesting that the same passage which appears to destroy Ermatinger's thesis is used by most other writers on Brockes to bolster up their arguments. Willi Flemming¹ quotes it in his analysis of the changing attitude to nature in the eighteenth century. Harry W. Pfund² uses it for his discussion of Brockes' style. It is also important for the study of Brockes' philosophy of life and attitude to nature.³

The entire poem is worth investigating. It is reminiscent of the passage from Shaftesbury's Moralists which Ermatinger quoted in his discussion of Brockes.⁴ I have reproduced both texts⁵ in full and placed them side by side. To facilitate comparison I have split up the Shaftesbury text to coincide as far as possible with the lines of Brockes' poem.

¹Willi Flemming, Der Wandel des deutschen Naturgefühls vom 15. zum 18. Jahrhundert (Halle, 1931), p. 88.

²Harry W. Pfund, Studien zu Wort und Stil bei Brockes (New York, 1935), pp. 25-28.

³Otto Janssen, Naturempfindung und Naturgefühl bei Barthold Heinrich Brockes (diss. Bonn, 1907). Fritz von Manikowski, Die Welt- und Lebensanschauung in dem „Irdischen Vergnügen in Gott“ von Barthold Heinrich Brockes (diss. Greifswald, 1914).

⁴Ermatinger, op.cit., p. 60.

⁵Anthony Earl of Shaftesbury, Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times, ed. John M. Robertson (London, 1900), vol. II, pp. 97-99. B.H. Brockes, Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott, vol. VIII, pp. 2-6. The German text is anomalous.

Ye fields and woods, my
refuge from the toilsome
world of business,
receive me in your
quiet sanctuaries,
and favour my retreat
and thoughtful solitude.

Ye verdant plains, how
gladly I salute ye!

Hail all ye blissful
mansions!
known seats!
delightful prospects!

majestic beauties of
this earth,

and all ye rural powers
and graces!

Blessed by ye chaste
abodes of happiest
mortals,
who here in peaceful
innocence enjoy a life
unenvied.
though divine; whilst
with its blessed
tranquillity
it affords a happy lei-
sure and retreat for man,
who, made for contempla-
tion,

and to search his own
and other natures,
may here best meditate

the cause of things,

and, placed amidst the
various scenes of Nature,

may nearer view her
works.

O glorious nature! su-
premely fair
and sovereignly good!
all-loving

Gefild' und Wälder! meine Zuflucht,
aus der mühseligen Welt
voll Pein,
Voll Gram und Sorgen! nehmt mich ein

In euer ruhig Heiligthum! begünsti-
get mein einsam Leben!
Da ich mich, von Zufriedenheit, von
einem ernsten Ueberlegen
Und von Betrachtungen begleitet,
will, aus der Stadt,
zu euch begeben!

Ihr grünen Ebenen, wie vergnügt begrüß
ich euch!

Glück, Heil und Segen
Erfüllen immer eure Fluren! ihr holden
Vorwürf' unsers Blicks,
Ihr angenehmen Gegenden,
Der Erden majestätische Schönheit, du
Inbegriff des wahren
Glücks,

Du Feld=und Land=Lust voller Anmuth,
ihr keusch= und reinen
Wohnungen
Der höchstbeglückten Sterblichen,

Die hier, in Unschuld=vollem Frieden,
ein unbeneidet Leben
nährt,

(Ob solches gleich fast göttlich ist)
da es, in Segenreicher
Stille,

Uns einen edlen Müßiggang und eine
süße Ruh gewährt:

Uns, die wir, für Betrachtungen (um
uns so wohl, als andre
Wesen,

Zu untersuchen) eigentlich formieret
scheinen und erlesen;

Die wir, die Eigenschaft der Dinge,
mit mehrer Einsicht,
zu ergründen,

Nie bessere Gelegenheit, als wie in
euren Fluren, finden,

Und (in die Scenen der Natur, bey
euch, gesetzt) von
ihren Werken

Die Gründ' und Wunder fähig sind,
am allernächsten zu
bemerken.

Glorwürdig' herrliche Natur! O! die
du, über alles, schön,
Und, über alles, gütig bist; die al-
les liebet, alles
nährt;

and all-lovely,

all-divine!

whose looks are so becoming and of such infinite grace;
whose study brings such wisdom,

and whose contemplation such delight;

whose every single work affords an ampler scene,
and is a nobler spectacle

than all which ever art presented!

O mighty Nature!
wise substitute of Providence! impowered creatress!

Or thou empowering Deity, supreme creator!

Thee I invoke and thee alone adore.
To thee this solitude, this place, these rural meditations are sacred;
whilst thus inspired with harmony of thought,

though unconfined by words, and in loose numbers,
I sing of Nature's order in created beings, and celebrate the beauties which resolve in thee,

the source and principle of all beauty and perfection.
Thy being is boundless, unsearchable, impenetrable.

In thy immensity all thought is lost,
fancy gives over its flight,

Die, über alles, ehrenwürdig, und,
über alles, liebenswerth;

Ja, die selbst göttlich, da, in ihr, der Gottheit Wesen Selbst zu sehn.

Du, deren Blicke so gefällig, von solcher Wohlanständigkeit,

Die fast unendlich. Das Betrachten von deiner Vollenkommenheit

Bringt lauter Weisheit, und das Forschen in deinem Wesen, lauter Lust.

Ein jedes deiner Werke giebt so schöne Scenen unsern Augen,

Und ist ein herrlicher Spectakel, als alle Künst' in unsrer Brust

Uns jemals vorzustellen taugen.

O groß' und mächtige Natur!

Der Vorsicht weiseste Verordnung, durch Vollmacht, rege Schöpferinn!

Doch mehr, der Du ihr Vollmacht gabst, Du höchster Schöpfer, Dich allein,

Verehret, rufet, flehet an, mein Dir allein ergebner Sinn.

Dir soll die Einsamkeit, der Ort, mein Feld=Gesang, geweiht seyn,

Indem, mit der Gedanken Wohllaut begeistert, ich anjetzt besinge,

Obgleich mit eingeschränkten Worten, die Ordnung der erschaffnen Dinge,

Das wahre Wesen der Natur, und der Geschöpfe Schönheit preise,

Die alle sich, in Dir, entbinden, zu der, von Dir bestimmten, Zeit,

Du Quell und Ursprung aller Schönheit und aller Vollenkommenheit!

Es ist Dein Wesen undurchdringlich, nicht zu erforschen, sonder Schranken.

In deiner Unermeßlichkeit vergehen aller Welt Gedanken,

Versenken und verlieren sich; die Phantasey hennnt [sic] ihren Flug;

and wearied imagination
spends itself in vain,

finding no coast nor
limit of this ocean, nor,
in the widest tract
through which it soars,
one point yet nearer

the circumference than
the first centre whence
it parted.

Thus having oft essayed,
thus sallied forth into
the wide expanse,
when I return again with-
in myself, struck with
the sense of this so
narrow being
and of the fulness of
that immense one, I dare
no more
behold the amazing
depths

nor sound the abyss of
Deity.

Yet since by thee, O
sovereign mind, I have
been formed such as I am,
intelligent and rational,
since the peculiar digni-
ty of my nature
is to know and con-
template thee,
permit that with due
freedom
I exert those faculties
with which thou hast
adorned me.

Bear with my venturous
and bold approach. And
since nor vain curiosity,
nor fond conceit, nor
love of aught save thee
alone
inspires me with such
thoughts as these,
be thou my assistant and
guide me in this pursuit,

whilst I venture thus to
tread the labyrinth of
wide Nature
and endeavour to trace
thee in thy works.

Die Kraft zu bilden wirkt nicht,
indem sie, in der Gott-
heit Meer,

Kein Ufer, keinen Grund, kein Ende,
noch in dem allerfern-
sten Zug,

Worein sie stieg, nur einen Punkt
befindet, welcher näher
wäre

Zum Umkreis, als das erste Centrum,
von dem sie sich zu-
erst erhoben.

Hievon, wenn ich ins leere Weite ge-
stiegen, nahm ich oft
die Proben

Bey meiner Rückkehr in mich selbst.
Erstaunt ob meinem
kleinen Ich,

Und ob der unermeßnen Fülle der
großen Einheit, scheu
ich mich,

Die so erstaunlich tiefe Tiefe der
Allgemeinheit auszu-
finden,

Noch den unendlich hohen Abgrund der
Gottheit ferner zu er-
gründen.

Jedoch, weil ich, o höchster Geist!
von Dir, so wie ich bin,
formieret,

Vernünftig hier erschaffen bin, und
meines Wesens Würdig-
keit

Darinn bestehet, Dich zu kennen, und
Deine Vollenkommenheit

Zu untersuchen, zu bewundern; ach so
erlaub', in dieser Zeit,
Daß ich die Kraft und Fähigkeit,
Mit schuldger Freyheit, brauchen möge,
mit welchen du mich
ausgezieret.

Erdulde mein verwegnes Nähern. Und,
weil kein' eitle Neu-
begier,

Noch stolze Thorheit, noch die Liebe
zu etwas sonst, als
Dir allein,

Mir die Gedanken eingegeben; so laß
mein Thun gesegnet seyn.

Sey Selbst mein Beystand, leite mich,
und zeige Deine Wege
mir,

Da ich es wag', in der Natur so wei-
ten Labyrinth zu gehen,

Dir in demselben nachzuspüren, und
Dich in Deinem Werk zu
sehen.

It is now apparent that the lines „Glorwürdig' herrliche Natur!" which are generally thought to be by Brockes are part of his adaptation of Shaftesbury. This discovery weakens the poem's value as evidence. We cannot draw conclusions about Brockes' progress as a poet, about his style, about his viewpoint or anything else from it. It may be argued that Brockes used the Shaftesbury source in the first place because it was close to his philosophy of life and way of writing or that he assimilated it and improved as a poet. But surely the lesson of this discovery is that we cannot establish what is peculiar to Brockes until we have allayed the doubts that now arise concerning the origin of his work as a whole. It might in fact be Brockes' regular practice to take from others whatever comes his way.

The question of Brockes' sources has not really been tackled. Rudolf von Delius¹ maintains that Brockes' work is the product of the German soul, independent of foreign models. Karl Lohmeyer² also writes that Brockes owed nothing to foreign influences. These articles, however, were written over thirty years ago and research into sources could have made some progress since. But the most recent essays on Brockes make no mention of sources. Dietrich Bode's "Nachwort" to the reprint of the selection of Brockes' poems by Hagedorn and Wilckens

¹Rudolf von Delius, Der Schöpfungsgarten (Hamburg, 1917), p. 6.

²Karl Lohmeyer, "Der Ratsherr B.H. Brockes (1680-1747) als politischer Dichter," Hamburger Geschichts- und Heimatblätter, X (1937).

is an exception: "Was ihm eignet, ist Frömmigkeit. Diese Frömmigkeit mag noch gespeist sein aus den Erbauungsbüchern mystischer Geister wie Johann Arndt und Christian Scriver."¹ Hans M. Wolff² had already advanced Arndt and Scriver as sources. According to Wolff, the main ideas expressed by Brockes are to be found in Book IV Vom Wahren Christenthum by Arndt and several of Brockes' poems are almost a paraphrase of Arndt.³

Imogen Kupffer⁴ does not wholly agree, as Arndt's vale of tears seems to her quite different from Brockes' joyous world. She also points out that what natural description there is in Arndt is associated with religious ideas; flowers with heavenly flowers and the earth with the new earth to come.

Wolff says further that Brockes has taken many things from Christian Scriver's "Gottholds Zufällige Andachten" but Imogen Kupffer again draws attention to the differences. Scriver uses nature symbolically and moralizes too heavily. For instance, an oak tree represents the lust of the flesh, an idea quite alien to Brockes' way of thinking. Nor would Scriver's emphasis on the renunciation of the world appeal to him.

Imogen Kupffer (pp. 21-23) comes much nearer the truth when she briefly discusses physico-theology and

¹Metzler, p. 3⁺.

²Hans M. Wolff, "Brockes' Religion," PMLA, LXII (1947), 1134-1135.

³I shall be discussing this elsewhere.

⁴Imogen Kupffer, Das Irdische Vergnügen in Gott von B.H. Brockes. Eine Untersuchung zu Wesen und Entwicklung der Naturlyrik (Unpublished thesis, Göttingen, 1956). This work will be subsequently referred to as "Kupffer."

gives the contents of Derham's Physico-Theology which Brockes had read "with pleasure and profit." Brockes, she tells us, is noteworthy for his early use of physico-theology in his poetry. Since Brockes' Irdisches Vergnügen vol. I appeared in 1721, she wonders whether Derham¹ could have influenced it. Deeming it not particularly important she goes on to her next point. It is almost unaccountable that she should have failed to take up such a promising line of research. Perhaps it is the way of all researchers that they sometimes miss what is under their noses by pursuing too ardently one particular hypothesis. Concerned with the development of nature poetry, she is not so interested in Derham and Arndt, since they have not reached such an advanced stage in this development as Brockes. She selects the poem "Ein Bett voll Hyazinthen" as an example of this advance and notes the following points: the beginning of secularisation in the treatment of nature for its own sake, instead of for its symbolic significance, the expression of an intense, direct joy and the conception

¹William Derham (1657-1735), divine, elected member of the Royal Society in 1702. He delivered the Boyle lectures 1711-1712 and published them in 1713 as Physico-Theology, or a Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God from his Works of Creation. According to Schröder's Lexikon der hamburgischen Schriftsteller, vol. II, p. 249, it was translated into German in 1730 with further editions in 1731 and 1736. Derham's 7th ed. was used. By 1764 thirteen editions of the German version had appeared. Derham's Astro-Theology, or a Demonstration of the being and attributes of God, from a survey of the heavens (1715) was translated in the 5th edition--Astro-Theologie, oder: Himmlisches Vergnügen in Gott, bei aufmerksamen Anschauen des Himmels und genauerer Betrachtung der himmlischen Körper zum augenscheinlichen Beweis, daß ein Gott, und derselbige ein allgütigstes, allweises, allmächtiges Wesen sei. It was translated by Johann Albert Fabricius and dedicated to Brockes.

of a bountiful, loving Creator. Such a God, she feels, has little to do with the rational God of physico-theology, nor has Brockes any need of the teleological proof of God as he is already a firm believer.

It is of course obvious, when one considers baroque poetry, that Brockes is doing something completely different, even when he uses some of the old material. The precise character of his innovations and the reasons for such a striking change of direction must be investigated. As is known, Brockes started his writing career in the old tradition with a number of conventional occasional poems, a baroque oratorio Der für die Sünde der Welt gemarterte und sterbende Jesus (1712), and Bethlehemitischer Kindermord (1715), a translation of Marino. Seen historically, Das Irdische Vergnügen in Gott is an achievement since it breaks with the past and points to the future. How was this possible? Did Brockes achieve this independently? Was he "mittelmäßig" as Ermatinger seems to think or was he some kind of genius in harmony with the German soul? All these pressing questions lead us back to the problem of sources.

As the first step in my investigation I propose to do the opposite of Imogen Kupffer, to take up the points she missed and examine what Brockes had in common with Arndt and Derham. (I will deal with Scriver later in the question of Brockes' relationship to pietism). These points are what they all called "God's works" -- sun, moon and stars, planets, earth, sea, mountains with the emphasis on science. These subjects are to be found throughout all nine volumes of the Irdisches Vergnügen but may be studied most profitably in his scientific poems.

CHAPTER II

BROCKES AND SCIENCE

B.J. Zinck, the editor of the posthumous volume IX (1748) of the Irdisches Vergnügen informs us that Brockes was already interested in the sciences in 1723 when he was at the height of his poetic powers ("die Muse unsers berühmten Dichters in ihrer ersten Schönheit und in ihrem stärksten Feuer"). The result of such studies, he tells us were the poems "Regen," "Wasser," "Feuer," "Die Sonne," "Die Berge" in volume I of the Irdisches Vergnügen and "Erde," "Luft," "Die fünf Sinne" in volume II and apparently the long scientific section in volume IX entitled Betrachtungen über die drey Reiche der Natur. I shall discuss this last work first as it is almost entirely a versification of scientific knowledge and easier to analyse than the others which contain more strands of thought and a variety of different elements.

This work has perhaps done more to damage Brockes' poetic reputation than anything else, although few critics have succeeded in reading through the four hundred or so pages as far as the end. Yet there is a great deal to be learned from it about Brockes' background. Many of its themes constantly recur throughout the Irdisches Vergnügen.

Brockes makes his motives for writing this work quite clear in his rhymed introduction. Creation is a means of approaching God for it declares his existence. Not only are the great suns and planets witnesses:

Auch im kleinsten Körnchen Sand
Wird die Allmachtshand erkannt.

Instead of being blind and indifferent we must study all created things. However, the greatest wonders are hidden from us, so Brockes prays for enlightenment:

Herr, erleuchte mein Gemüthe!
Zünd' in mir dein Feuer an,
Daß ich deine Macht und Güte
Sehn, verstehn und preisen kann.
Tilge der Gewohnheit Stärke!
Weil die größten Wunderwerke
Ihr verdickter Nebel deckt,
Und vor unserm Blick versteckt.¹

The belief that God is manifest in creation is the major tenet of Brockes' faith and it is repeated tirelessly throughout the nine volumes of his work. The scientific tour of the animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms which follows, with dreary masses of material and endless catalogues must be considered in the light of this. Nothing is irrelevant since the whole of creation reveals to us something about God. What is perhaps boring to us was very exciting for Brockes and like-minded contemporaries.

In "Das Reich der Metalle" Brockes defines metals, explains the theory of their origin and continues to name and comment on every metal in existence. His general technique is to tell us all he knows about their properties and uses, then add some remarks about their place in man's life and economy. Gold and silver, for instance, are the world's idols, and crimes are committed for their possession. On the other hand they foster industry and trade. Races without them, though poor and contented, live like cattle,

¹A variant of this is used as the concluding stanza of the poem "Das Feuer."

without art and learning. Iron is useful for tools like the plough which is indispensable for the production of bread. Yet it can also be used for weapons which destroy human life. Where appropriate, Brockes finds medicinal and other uses -- mercury is good against fleas, sulphur (in the section "Halbmetallen") is good for snake-bites and for preserving wine. This part of the tour has taken up about thirty-five pages with very few pious interpolations. Just as we begin to wonder about Brockes' intentions, he closes with the words:

Gottes Ehre soll allein
Meiner Lieder Endzweck seyn.

The next section is similarly treated but the subject is stones. Brockes loses himself in the subject so that the editor, after printing three stanzas composed entirely of names of stones, spares the reader with the explanatory footnote: „Der Herr Verfasser hatte noch 17 Strophen von Steinen auf diese Weise gemacht, welche wir aber aus Beysorge, dem Leser beschwerlich zu seyn, weglassen." But Brockes did not indulge in this extravagance to bore his contemporaries or to make himself the laughing-stock of twentieth-century "Germanisten." As he tells us at the beginning of the catalogue, it is to make us wonder at the "Schöpfers Wundermacht." "Erstaunen" is the keynote. At the end of the list he tells us that abundance (Menge) shows God's love and wisdom.¹ All this is very important

¹This fits into the background discussed by Arthur O. Lovejoy, The Great Chain of Being (New York, 1960). This was first published in 1936. Abbreviated subsequently as "Lovejoy."

if Brockes is to be understood. Talking of marble, Brockes produces a particularly bad stanza but its apparent triviality, even stupidity, should not divert our attention from his intention:

In Europa hier und dorten
Find't man ihn im Ueberfluss;
Welschland zeugt so viele Sorten,
Daß man sich verwundern muß.
Auch in Frankreich, auch in Sachsen
Läset Gott viel Marmor wachsen,
Laßt uns, wenn wir Marmor sehn,
Denken: Gott dein Werk ist schön.
(p. 52)

Several pages are devoted to the loadstone and the force of magnetism. Brockes gives all the explanations he can think of from the idea that the magnetic force is caused by a spirit to Halley's more scientific view. He soon becomes confused by so many conflicting ideas and decides that it is better to observe and admire than to quarrel about differences of opinion since human knowledge is "ungewiß und klein." He also discusses in detail the uses of salt. After noting its importance for food, Brockes observes that it preserves (vor Fäulnis schützt). In answer to the much-asked question why the sea is salty, he replies that, if it were not salty, it would stink, the fish would die and the air would be poisoned so that everything on earth would be infected:

Solcher Plage, Quaal und Pein
Wehret Gott durchs Salz allein.
(p. 82)

We are now introduced to "Das Pflanzenreich" by the words:

In Gewächsen und im Kraut
Sey dein Finger angeschaut.
(p. 94)

This section takes the same form as the section on minerals; it is a collection of scientific knowledge about plants and long catalogues in rhyme, all punctuated by exclamations of wonder and praise for the wisdom and power of the Creator. Since the subject is the vegetable kingdom, Brockes, as may be expected, gives some space to the conception of God as the great "Speisemeister."¹ He is particularly grateful that the Creator has provided so many pleasant ways of quenching one's thirst. Barley alone provides several. Very expressively, he describes the joy of beer-drinking -- it cools the lips, tongue and palate. He concludes:

Und es trinke niemand Bier
Ohn er danke Gott dafür
.....
Dir sey denn für solchen Trank,
Großer Geber! Lob und Dank.
(p. 146)

The awareness of God as the supplier of food, like the other themes of this work, recurs throughout Brockes' Irdisches Vergnügen and, like the others, no matter how it might amuse us nowadays, must be seen in its context. Witkop² gives this idea undue prominence when he tells us that Brockes is only interested in the Creator as a "Speisemeister."

A long section of the "Pflanzenreich" takes us into

¹Ird. Verg. (IX, 154). The editor once more comes to the reader's rescue and cuts out a number of stanzas. Brockes had become over-enthusiastic about the different sorts of apples in the world.

²Philipp Witkop, Die neuere deutsche Lyrik (Leipzig and Berlin, 1910), p. 107.

the new world of the microscope and is purely scientific at first sight. Brockes tells us about the progress that has been made in botany since the ancients, and that we have to thank two people for this, Grew and Malpighius:¹

Die an ganz verschiednen Orten,
Und zugleich zu einer Zeit,
Zeigten, fast mit selben Worten,
Die verborgne Seltsamkeit,
Welche in den kleinsten Dingen
Die Natur hervorzubringen,
Und, zu ihres Schöpfers Preis,
Wunderbar zu bilden weis.
(p. 100)

Although the pages which follow read like a text-book of botany, Brockes is not being pedantic, but is drawing our attention to the wonderful world of nature which the microscope now reveals. Frequently-used words like "Wunderwerk," "erstaunen," "neue Lust," "vergnügt," emphasize the wonder and pleasure which it inspires in him. This is also true of the animal kingdom. Further scientific accounts draw our attention to God's "Allmacht," "Weisheit," and "Liebe" in the wonderful design of the human body and the miraculous way in which it functions. There is no doubt about Brockes' motives as they are expressed repeatedly -- "Der Gottheit Werk im Sinnlichen bedachtsam zu bewundern," and "Gottes Allmachtschein,/ Der überall so herrlich strahlet, zu predigen" (p. 247). The following passage is perhaps the key to the whole work:

Von einer recht= und wahren Gottheit die allerhellst'
und klarsten Spuren

¹Nehemiah Grew (1641-1712)
Marcello Malpighi (1628-1694)

Zeigt unsern überführten Seelen das Reich lebend'ger
Kreaturen.
Nicht nur ihr Körper, der so künstlich, Bewegung, Sinnen,
Geist und Leben,
Sind Zeugen einer weisen Quell, und können von dem
Ursprungsstand
(Der sonst, vor allzugroßer Größe selbst unsern Seelen
unbekannt)
Des Schöpfers, der sonst unbegreiflich, die allerbesten
Proben geben.
(p. 195)

Creation is a "Buch der Weisheit" which man reads when he studies the external world, and God is the "Inhalt" since he sees in creation such order and design as only a God could create.

The "animal kingdom" is similar in form and treatment to the other two kingdoms. Long sections on the different animal species and their uses for man again illustrate the ideas of plenitude and bounty. Animals were made to supply man with food, clothing and even medicine. This is also true of harmful animals whose existence does not disrupt Brockes' harmonious picture since they do not multiply as much as other animals (p. 244).

A final section consisting of a series of poems about individual animals has been added to the animal kingdom. This is different in inspiration from the rest of the work and is not really an integral part of it.

Many of the motifs and ideas of the complete poem have been used again by Brockes in other poems. It would therefore be useful to find their origin. The source of the general scientific ideas ought to serve our purposes. A more thorough search for each minor detail would really require a separate investigation of contemporary texts and this would yield too little information about Brockes

to merit such expenditure of time and effort. Besides, since Brockes' science reports are subordinated to the religious intention, it is the combination of both which is of most interest.

Johann Arndt has been suggested as a source of Brockes' Irdisches Vergnügen, one of the reasons being the similarity of the subject matter: „Arndt bespricht in der Reihenfolge der Schöpfungsgeschichte die wichtigsten Erscheinungen der Natur, Himmel und Erde, Sonne und Wasser, Pflanzen- und Tierwelt etc.....“¹ When we examine both works, however, it is obvious from the dearth of scientific material presented by Arndt that Brockes could not have relied on him entirely as a source. Christian Wolff, on the other hand, offers an extremely wide range of detailed material on the very subjects which Brockes is versifying in his work Vernünfftige Gedancken von den Wirkungen der Natur, den Liebhabern der Weisheit mitgeteilt (Halle, 1723).² Since little is known about Brockes' relationship to Wolff, the two works are worth comparing.

Both deal with the same subjects -- the "anatomy" of plants, the circulation of the blood, and the structure of animals. The treatment is different. Wolff has no exclamations of admiration for the wisdom and goodness of God but seems to be writing a text-book. He is teaching us about the world, whereas Brockes is telling us about

¹Hans M. Wolff, Die Weltanschauung der deutschen Aufklärung (Bern, 1949), p. 138.

²I am using the 5th edition (Halle, 1746).

God when he writes about plants and animals. Although the subjects of both works are identical, there are so many differences that it would not be justified to conclude that Brockes had used Wolff as a source completely. (A case could be made for the concluding chapters of Wolff which are very close to the end of the Drey Reiche).

They both discuss the loadstone and magnetism but the emphasis is different. Wolff, when discussing plants in considerable detail, also mentions the work of Grew and Malpighi and gives us a "microscope-eye-view" of plants, but he is more scientific and up-to-date than Brockes. They are both reviewing the opinions of others about the subjects under discussion, but Wolff obviously has access to more recent sources and is well-informed. The list of authorities (members of the Royal Society and the Académie des Sciences) which he gives, seems to indicate that he is reviewing their findings. Brockes quotes very few authorities, nor does he appear to be reviewing their work in detail. For example, concerning pollen in plants, Brockes says that its use is not known but that Camerarius (1665-1721) thinks "Es muß für die Eyerlein/Ein befruchtend Sämlein seyn" (p. 111) then goes on to tell us what others think. Wolff knows its importance for plant reproduction and is himself engaged on experiments with flowers (p. 664). Each writer seems to stress different aspects of the subjects. Brockes makes an attempt to classify plants,¹ Wolff

¹Brockes owes his system of plant classification either directly or indirectly to Joseph Pitton de Tournefort, Elemens de Botanique (1694). In his Kupfer=Bibel (Augsburg, 1733) Johann Jacob Scheuchzer presents an identical system and tells us that it is based on de Tournefort.

omits this. The idea of preformation ("Selbst die Form vom größten Baum/In dem Samen findet Raum" p. 114) and the whole mystery of seeds fascinates Brockes so utterly that his senses "sich versenken wie ein Tropfen in ein Meer" (pp. 114-115). Yet, in a later section of the work, Brockes does not seem to be so sure how preformation applies to animals (p. 224). "Ob eines Körpers ganze Form schon wirklich in der Mutter Ey/Befindlich" and whether the form is in the spermatozoon also is for Brockes "ungewiß." Wolff did not mention preformation¹ in trees but he considers the other points in the section from Chapter XIV to the end which Brockes' poem follows closely. Wolff, as Brockes, has just mentioned Leeuwenhoek's discovery of animalcules (spermatozoa) then continues: „Ehe die Saamen-Thierlein bekandt waren, glaubte man, die Frucht sey schon ihrer wahren Gestalt nach im kleinen gebildet in dem Eyerlein anzutreffen: welche Meinung auch noch die meisten Medici und Physici hegen."

(Bk. IV, ch. vi, section 454)

Brockes' language, besides being more simple than Wolff's, contains more imagery. One could readily jump

¹Charles Singer, A Short History of Biology (Oxford, 1931), p. 498. Preformation is the view that the form of the complete creature is present in the egg. It follows that the forms of all men and all women, like a series of Chinese boxes (emboîtement), can be traced back to Eve. The theory was unchallenged until the middle of the eighteenth century and those who held it were called "ovists." In 1679 Leeuwenhoek depicted the spermatozoon. Another group (the spermatists) then believed that the spermatozoon harboured the preformed organism. Consequently, Adam's seeds held all mankind. The spermatists had misinterpreted Aristotle's idea that the male was responsible for the form and the female for the substance.

to the conclusion that Brockes has an ability to transform the dullest material, except that some acquaintance with the literature of natural science reveals that this is not new. For Brockes, buds on the branches are like children wrapped in many blankets to protect them from the frost. Grew, in a similar context, uses the words "blankets" and "veils." Buds are protected "as a child in the womb."¹ Brockes also compares plants to animals. The roots are as a mouth taking in food. The passages within the stalk are intestines through which the food, after "cooking" in the stomach, rises. This again is not poetic imagery but the language of Aristotle. Lones writes:

Respecting the nutrition of plants, he [Aristotle] says that they obtain food by means of their roots, which he compares with the mouth of an animal,² and with the blood-vessels of the umbilical cord.²

The expression "cooking" which Brockes uses when discussing animals, also originates in Aristotle and would naturally have currency as long as he remained as the authority in these matters. Vesalius (1514-1564)³ and Andrea Cesalpino (1519-1603)⁴ used the expression. Although Grew and Malpighi still think in terms of the analogy between plants and

¹Nehemiah Grew, The Anatomy of Plants with an Idea of a Philosophical History of Plants (London, 1682), p. 146.

²Thomas East Lones, Aristotle's Researches in Natural Science (London, 1912), p. 96.

³Erik Nordenskiöld, The History of Biology: a survey, trans. L.B. Eyre (London, 1929), p. 103. Vesalius says that the food is "cooked" in the abdominal cavity.

⁴F.S. Bodenheimer, The History of Biology: an introduction (London, 1958), p. 49. The blood is "boiled" in the heart and rises as a vapour in the lungs.

animals, their vocabulary has changed. Both use the word "fermentation"¹ instead of "cooking." Therefore Brockes seems to be behind in his scientific terminology. When he discusses how food becomes blood in the body, he tells us that it is cooked in the stomach, "gekocht wie auf einem Kuchenherd" (p. 206), whereas Wolff, discussing the same question, says that the ancients wrongly thought that the food was cooked (verkocht) in the stomach (p. 655). Brockes also seems to be behind in the information he gives us about sap in plants as there is no mention of water. Wolff tells us that the ancients thought that plants were nourished through the earth alone and that water was not necessary (p. 616). He devotes several pages to a review of experiments proving the importance of water for plant growth.

The framework of both works (Brockes' Drey Reiche and Wolff's Vernünfftige Gedanken Book IV) is the same. The same subjects are dealt with in the same order, but, as we have seen, there are differences in treatment. Brockes emphasizes different aspects and introduces his favorite speculations about God's wisdom in creation. There is a long section (not found in Wolff) in a lively style in which Brockes expresses his admiration for what he feels are the Creator's very wise arrangements for procreation (pp. 220-229). Wolff's final chapters IV, V, VI on "Die Sinnen," "Bewegung," "Erzeugung" are fairly close to Brockes' account (p. 212 ff.) apart from the above exception. Brockes writes: "Das herrlichste von allen Sinnen

¹Nordenskiöld, op.cit., p. 162: "Fermentation plays the same part in Malpighi's speculations as 'cooking' does in Aristotle's."

ist das vortreffliche Gesicht" and Wolff (section 425):

"Der vornehmste unter den Sinnen ist das Gesichte."

Leeuwenhoek's experiment and the idea of preformation are discussed by both; also spontaneous generation.

Brockes reports that the previously-held view that creatures come into being through fermentation and putrefaction is no longer found among intelligent people. It is contrary to nature, for the origin of life is in the seed (p. 218).

Wolff writes:

Es zeigt die tägliche Erfahrung, daß Menschen und Thiere durch den Beyschlaff eines Männleins und Weibleins erzeugt werden...

(ch. vi, section 439)

It is extremely difficult to draw any valid conclusions from this comparison of Wolff and Brockes. Brockes could have started his Drey Reiche using other sources, and might have come across Wolff's book half-way through. The changing attitude to preformation also suggests this. On the other hand, there were so many sources of scientific material at that period that it was possible to write a work like the Drey Reiche without consulting the original sources -- the Transactions of the Royal Society and of the Académie des Sciences. When one compares Brockes' ideas on the structure of plants with the original source, Nehemiah Grew's Anatomy of Plants, one finds only a few points of contact but not enough to suggest that Brockes had first-hand knowledge of it. Although this points to the use of secondary sources, the fact remains that these ideas were originally contributed to the history of science by Grew and Malpighi. Similarly, whether Brockes drew some

of his material from Wolff or not, it is the property of the scientists acknowledged by Wolff as his sources. It is therefore to them that we must turn for further clues.

The spirit and motives behind Wolff's Vernünftige Gedanken have still to be compared with what has been revealed about Brockes. From the text itself there is no indication that Wolff is doing anything further than present facts in a text-book manner but the preface is more revealing. The first sentence is the key to the difference between the two writers: „Die Erkenntnis der Natur befördert auf vielfältige Weise die Glückseligkeit des menschlichen Geschlechtes..." The rational element predominates. "Erkenntnis" and "Glückseligkeit" are stressed. "Glückseligkeit" here has little in common with Brockes' "Vergnügen," as it has all the associations with the Enlightenment and the belief that happiness springs from rational submission to law. The primary concern is man, whereas Brockes emphasizes God. Throughout the preface, causal conjunctions like "damit" and "weil" establish clear logical links between the ideas. Brockes' ideas are quite clear, but they are not given to the reader in this way; they have to be deduced from a style fraught with such imagery as "Allmachtshand," "Gottes Finger," "Nebel." Wolff's second sentence explains his first sentence. Understanding nature gives us happiness because it gives us mastery over creation. This utilitarian aspect of knowledge is subordinate in Brockes. Wolff next discusses the orderly arrangement of nature, "wie in der Natur immer eines um des andern willen ist und die darinnen befindliche

Cörper dergestalt beschaffen sind, daß diejenigen Würckungen, dazu sie durch ihr Wesen aufgelegt erfunden werden, von ihnen auf die beste Weise erfolgen können. Und hierinnen erblicket man nicht allein die Vollkommenheit, welche GOTT in die natürlichen Dinge geleet, damit sie ein Spiegel seiner Vollkommenheit seyn möchten, sondern man schmeckt auch zugleich den Verstand, die Weisheit, Macht und Güte Gottes, indem, was in seinem unsichtbaren Wesen verborgen lieget, aus den Wercken der Natur erkannt wird. Wie sollte aber dieses alles ohne Vergnügen abgehen?" This idea is closer to Brockes. Wolff is more rational and even attributes to God a clear reason for creating with such perfection -- to reflect his own perfection. Brockes also notes the exquisite order and purpose in created things and generally utters a hymn of praise. In the Drey Reiche (p. 108) he observes that the leaves on trees protect the buds from cold and air but fall in winter when there are no buds to protect. In the torrid zone the trees keep their leaves throughout the year to provide shelter from the sun. This is all a sign of admirable order. Wolff's creation is more a perfectly functioning clockwork revealing God's "Verstand." It is quite characteristic of the two attitudes that the external world reflects "den Verstand, [my italics] die Weisheit, Macht und Güte Gottes" for Wolff and for Brockes, "Liebe, [my italics] Weisheit, Macht und Güte." Wolff uses the word "tastes" ("schmeckt auch zugleich den Verstand"), a word which is a favorite with Brockes except that when Brockes uses it one can hear him smacking his lips. Wolff's God is "unsichtbar" and

"verborgen" but he is knowable through his works. Brockes wavers between a God who is manifest in his works and a God who is veiled in mystery.¹ The "Spiegel" image used by Wolff is also found in Brockes and is really a commonplace. Despite a few similarities, there are fundamental differences in outlook between Wolff and Brockes. It might therefore be better to seek Brockes' source of inspiration elsewhere.

If we return to the question of Brockes' scientific sources and look at the work of a number of scientists of the Royal Society, something interesting emerges. Grew's Anatomy of Plants expresses a philosophy which is identical with that of Brockes:

Wherefore Nature, and the Causes and Reasons of Things duly contemplated, naturally lead us unto God; and is one way of securing our veneration of Him; giving us not only a general Demonstration of his Being; but a particular one,² of most of the several Qualifications thereof.

The study of nature for Grew is his research on plants by means of the microscope. This constantly reveals divine wisdom. Like Brockes, but unlike Wolff, Grew gives a central place to the idea that nature leads to God as if this were the aim of his scientific investigations. He writes further:

Nor have we reason to fear going too far, in the Study of Nature; more, than entering into it; Because, the higher we rise in the true knowledge [sic] and due contemplation of This; the nearer we come to the Divine Author hereof.
(p. 80)

¹This is a question which will be discussed later.

²Op.cit., Pt. II, p. 79.

As we examine more works by scientists of the period we see that this view is so widespread that it could be considered the mainspring of scientific activity. In a sense, many were studying God in creation. It is therefore not surprising to find that metaphors like "God's Footsteps," "the Book of Nature," and many others suggesting that God manifests himself in the universe punctuate the scientific works of the time. It is also not surprising that Brockes, who shares the premise that the Creator is visible in Creation, should arrive at the same conclusions. In fact, it can without difficulty be shown that the majority of the poetic themes in the scientific poems are common property. Many of the other scientists, like Grew, introduced exclamations of praise for the Creator into their scientific reports.

Leeuwenhoek's work is also rich in the type of theme so common in Brockes. It happens repeatedly that he cries out in admiration after a long description of the perfect formation and admirable structure of minute insects. The following words echo Brockes:

We cannot in any better manner, glorify the Lord and Creator of the Universe, than that, in all things, how small soever they appear to our naked eyes, we contemplate the display of his Omniscience and Perfections with the utmost admiration.¹

¹The Select Works of Antony van Leeuwenhoek containing his microscopical discoveries in many of the works of nature, translated from the Dutch and Latin editions published by the author by Samuel Hoole (London, 1800), vol. I, p. 314.

Brockes' leading ideas are also found throughout Swammerdam's Book of Nature.¹ Swammerdam stresses the same things as Brockes. God is "manifestly known from his visible works" and the observation of these works gives "great pleasure" and leads to admiration and praise of the Creator:

From these examples it is manifest, what wonders are displayed to our eyes in insects, and with what ardency the searching into them should influence us to magnify the glory of God.

(Part I, 190)

Swammerdam, like Brockes, feels that, by describing for others what he has observed, he is praising God:

I shall attempt in the following pages to describe to the praise and glory of the supreme being, the whole change, or, if I may so call it, the transcreation of the nose-horned Beetle...

(Part I, 132)

There is also another motive for publishing scientific discoveries and this too is shared by Brockes. There are what Jan Swammerdam calls "frozen souls," for Brockes, the blind and the heedless. Robert Boyle is also concerned about them and finds that the scientist has the remedy "for such a person, by help of the anatomy, astronomy, chemistry, hydrostaticks, dioptricks, etc. will be able to disclose many wonderful things, about the fabrick, uses, etc. of many of the creatures, that by unskilful, or unattentive, or lazy perusers, are altogether either unperceived, or unheeded." Boyle writes:

It is fit therefore, that we publicly declare our admiration to others, and invite them to join with us, in acknowledging and celebrating the excellencies, that we have discovered to be displayed in the creatures...²

¹John Swammerdam, The Book of Nature or, the History of Insects, trans. by Thomas Flloyd (London, 1758).

²The Works of the Honourable Robert Boyle (London, 1744), vol. V, p. 715. The quotation is from "The Christian Virtuoso."

Whether or not Brockes had read the works of these scientists in the original or relied on secondary sources is difficult to find out. Their ideas and motives are certainly identical with his, even in their formulation. By the time Brockes was writing, these ideas were common-places which could be assimilated without plagiarism.¹ An attempt to pin Brockes down to one particular source is self-defeating.

It is also certain that the use of the microscope by scientists like Grew, Malpighi, Leeuwenhoek and Swammerdam offered Brockes the new vision of the wonderful world of minute creatures which he celebrates so much in his Irdisches Vergnügen. The poem "Das Große und Kleine" (Metzler, 242-247)² expresses ideas shared by the scientists:

Die Himmel und ein Staub sind beyde Wunder=Wercke,
Und beyde zeigen sie des Schöpfers Lieb' und Stärcke.

¹An idea about the numerous channels through which these ideas freely circulated may be gained from the following: Walter Graham, The Beginnings of English Literary Periodicals (New York, 1926); Lois Strong Gaudin, Les Lettres Anglaises dans l'Encyclopédie (New York, 1941); Minnie M. Miller, "English Science and Philosophy in France," PMLA, XLV (1930).

²The background of this poem is the popularity of science and the microscope among laymen which Marjorie Nicolson discusses in her essay "The Microscope and English Imagination" which first appeared as a monograph in Smith College Studies in Modern Languages in 1935. It is reprinted in her Science and Imagination (New York, 1956). The enthusiasm for science gave rise to a certain amount of satire of which Professor Nicolson gives many amusing examples. The preoccupation with vermin is ridiculed most of all. Gresham College, the home of the Royal Society was known as "Maggot-Monger's Hall."

In this poem Brockes is reporting the experience of a character called Lcidas who has been admiring the great things in the universe like the stars and the planets and now turns his attention to "ein kleiner roter Wurm":

Er setzte sich darauf ins Gras,
Die grosse Kleinheit zu betrachten,
Nahm sein Vergröss'rungs=Glas,
Das unserm Augen=Strahl
Jedweden Vorwurf funfzig mahl
Vergrössert zeigtet,
Und fand, daß dieser Wurm so klein,
Daß er, auch durch des Glases Schein,
Die Grösse kaum vom Sand=Korn übersteiget.
Hierüber fiel ihm ferner ein,
Was er vor kurtzer Zeit gelesen, ¹
Daß nemlich unsers Pfeffers Wesen
Nichts, als nur Würmchen, könnten seyn,
Die denn ja tausendmahl so klein,
Als dieses, welches, wenn man's misst,
Noch funfzig mahl so klein, als wie ein Sand=Korn, ist.
Bedencke nun ein Mensch derselben Kleinheit Grösse,
Fuhr er, erstaunet, fort: Ein solches Thierchen hat
Unstreitig Muskeln, Blut=Gefässe,
Unstreitig Adern, Nerven, Augen,
Die Augen ihre Feuchtigkeit.
Soll solch ein Thier sich fortzupflantzen taugen;
So überleg't einst die Beschaffenheit
Der Samen= und der Zeugungs=Glieder!
Hier stutzt' er abermahl, stund auf, gieng hin und wieder,
Hub endlich wieder an:
Wer ist, der dieß begreifen kann?
Wer, der des Schöpfers Macht und Wunder=Werck ermisst?
(Metzler, pp. 245-246)

This new vision is of primary importance for poetry, and Brockes' work clearly marks the transition. There are

¹The dictionaries of Grimm and Trübner do not help us with the meaning of "Pfeffer" here, but it can only refer to Leeuwenhoek's experiments with the microscope. John Ray, in his Wisdom of God Manifested in the Works of the Creation (1691) discusses the "infinite multitude of Animalcules discovered in Pepper-water." (I am using the 12th ed. Glasgow, 1750, p. 263 which will be referred to as Ray, Wisdom of God from now on.) The Oxford English Dictionary gives for Pepper-water "an infusion of black pepper, formerly used for microscopical observation of infusorian organisms."

several poems in the old manner¹ where dust reminds him of the fate of the body after death, but his interest in science brought about the revaluation which we have noted above--"Ein Stäubchen ist bewunderns werth" (I, 2). The attention is drawn away from the symbolic association to the object itself, and the formerly corrupt world is worth admiring; even vermin are beautiful. Brockes writes in his poem "Betrachtung verschiedener zu unserem Vergnügen belebten Insekten":

Dieß Wunder der Natur hab' ich erstaunt gesehn
In Vincentz Cabinet² in Holland, wo die Pracht,
die GOTT so gar im Ungezieffer macht,
Aus Ost und West zu Hauf gebracht,
Uns einen Schatz, der nicht zu schätzen, zeigt.
(IV, 201)

Leeuwenhoek's demonstration that vermin are not the product of putrefaction played a part in this revaluation, for to believe that anything could arise from spontaneous generation was to be on the side of the atheists who believed the world to be the product of chance. Swammerdam also presents evidence which "displays the wonders of God, in the insect world and at the same time utterly overthrows those impious notions, that these creatures are generated from putrified matter, and by a certain fortuitous concourse of particles." Leeuwenhoek, presenting evidence against this heresy, finds that the self-generating principle within plant and animal is further proof of God's

¹"Gedancken auf den Schnupff=Toback": „Lieber Mensch, du selber bist Staub, und stammest aus der Erden,/Wirst auch, eh' du dichs versiehst, wieder Staub und Erden werden?" (III, 703).

²A famous insect collection.

wisdom (Part I, 173). Elsewhere he wonders "whether any man in his senses, who is not entirely blinded by prejudice, can contemplate such a creature by the microscope, without acknowledging that it could not possibly be produced from corruption or the putrified bodies of other animals, and will he not rather cry out in the words of an eminent gentleman, who lately came to see my microscopical objects, 'O the depth of the Divine Wisdom, how inscrutable are his works!'" (II, 185) Surely Klopstock's veneration of the wonders of creation, his "Tropfen," "Würmchen," of "Die Frühlingsfeier" and the "Staub," and "Verwesung" of "Dem Erlöser" and "Dem Allgegenwärtigen" is in the same line of development as Brockes' enthusiastic "Ein Stäubchen ist bewunderns werth." In this world of science everything is worthy of admiration and what was previously considered negative now appears in a different light.

Boyle also tells us that "venomous creatures themselves are not to be kept out of the list (or number) of those, for which men ought to praise and thank the Creator" (p. 717). Like Brockes, he finds in the wonderful workmanship of the "divine architect" considerable edification. The study of the microcosm (man) "may conduce to piety, and suggest reflections fit to excite and cherish devotion" (p. 694). He then proceeds to describe for our edification the intricate structure of the body and its functions, much as Brockes had done in the Drey Reiche.

Besides being used for edification, the scientific discoveries are found to be useful weapons against atheism. Robert Boyle founded and endowed the Boyle lectures to

demonstrate the truth of the Christian Religion "against notorious Infidels viz. Atheists, Deists, Pagans, Jews and Mahometans, not descending to any controversies that are among Christians themselves." Richard Bentley was the first Boyle lecturer and his eight sermons,¹ preached in 1692, contain all the motifs of the work of the scientists-- "the Finger of God," "Footsteps of Divine Wisdom," the revelation of God's goodness and wisdom in his works, the excellence of divine workmanship seen in "the structure and origin of human bodies" and the frame of the world, all of which is bound to "excite and elevate our minds to his adoration and praise." The mood of the work is different from the writings of Brockes and the others, largely because Bentley is concentrating on his main text: "The fool hath said in his heart there is no God." Consequently, he spends more energy proving his enemies to be fools than venerating the Creator for the beauties of the creation.

The so-called atheists play an indirect part in the history of the ideas I am trying to trace. The Boyle lecturers especially tend to develop certain counter-arguments. To confute the belief that the world came into being by chance they will use the latest scientific discoveries as evidence of excellent workmanship and of a

¹The book which I am using contains the eight lectures in the following editions: Lecture 1--The Folly of Atheism, And (what is now called) DEISM; Even with respect to the Present Life (London, 1693): Lecture 2--Matter and Motion cannot Think: OR, A confutation of ATHEISM from the Faculties of the Soul, 3rd ed. (London, 1694): Lecture 3--A Confutation of Atheism from the Structure and Origin of Human Bodies, 3rd ed. (London, 1693): Lecture 4--As lecture 3, part II, 2nd ed. (London, 1693): Lecture 5--part III, 3rd ed. (London, 1694): Lecture 6--A Confutation of Atheism from the Origine and Frame of the World, 2nd ed. (London, 1694): Lecture 7--part II (London, 1693): Lecture 8--part III (London, 1693). Abbreviated as "Bentley" and the relevant lecture number.

divine plan behind it all. Lucretius, their bête noire, had declared the world to be too faulty to have been created by God.¹ They will stress its perfection. He had also pointed to the uselessness of certain wild beasts; they will attempt to explain the usefulness of all creation.

Ray and Derham in England are the most representative of many writers who developed arguments against atheism but managed to keep their admiration for the Creator's works uppermost. Physico-Theology or a Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God from his Works of Creation (1713) by William Derham was composed of the Boyle lectures which he delivered in 1711 and 1712. The work was very popular and had reached twelve editions by 1754. It was followed by Astro-Theology, or a Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God from a Survey of the Heavens (1715) which reached nine editions by 1750. In the preface to his Physico-Theology Derham explains that his demonstration is in Boyle's own manner, "that is a Physico-theological, way." His predecessors as Boyle lecturers, except for Bentley, "made it their business to prove the great points of Christianity in another way," but Mersenne, Cockburne, Ray, the Archbishop of Cambrai (Fénelon) and Perrault have done "something of this kind" before him. All who write in this manner are physico-theologists or physico-theologians. If the word "physico-theology" is equated with the second half of Derham's book title, "a demonstration of the being and attributes of God from his works of creation," then there is no ambiguity. If it is treated as the

¹De Rerum Natura V, lines 195 ff.

teleological argument for the existence of God then its use can be misleading. The stress would then be on argument and controversy. Brockes' work is often held to be the teleological argument in rhyme ("ein gereimter physico-theologischer Beweis") but this has been contested. Imogen Kupffer thinks that Brockes does not need the teleological argument since he already firmly believes in God.¹ Hans M. Wolff writes: „Seine Dichtung ist nicht Gottesbeweis, sondern Gottesdienst, andächtige Bewunderung eines in seiner Existenz nicht bezweifelten Gottes.“² Similarly, it is said of Christian Wolff that he makes no use of the teleological argument,³ yet, there is teleology in Wolff. The passage⁴ from his Vernünfftige Gedanken which we have already discussed expresses a belief that things are organized in the best possible manner so as to produce the results which they were intended to produce.

It is necessary to distinguish whether or not the observation of purpose in the world is exploited as an argument for the existence of God. The existence of God is always implied, but implication and controversy can yield different works of different styles. When teleology enters Brockes' work, the main concern is the incentive it

¹Kupffer, p. 35.

²Hans M. Wolff, op.cit., p. 134.

³Ernst Kohlmeier, Kosmos und Kosmogonie bei Christian Wolff, ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Aufklärungszeitalters (diss, Göttingen, 1911), p. 47: "Man hat den teleologischen Gottesbeweis bei Wolff vermißt."

⁴Above pp. 28-29.

gives to praise and edification rather than to polemic. The occasions when Brockes rails against atheists are too few to be representative.¹ Polemic he must feel is a waste of time since creation itself is much more eloquent. God's existence is written in "dieses Weltbuchs A B C." It is proclaimed by all creation:

Alles redet itzt und singet,
Alles tönet und erklinget,
Gott, von Deiner Wunder=Macht!
(Metzler, p. 4)

Those who cannot read and hear are simply "tummer,/Als das Vieh und Fische..." or "unempfindlich."²

The genre which Derham calls physico-theological interests us because the ideas which recur there also recur in Brockes' work. Rather than use terms like physico-theology and teleology loosely, it would be more precise to dispense with them and examine the subjects themselves. One of the commonest of these is the one already discussed in connection with the work of the scientists--the structure of the body and, in the case of the microscopists, the structure of plants and animals. There was a very close connection between science and religion although the primary aim was the communication of scientific information. The aim of Derham and the others is religious and the means scientific material. Since they are non-specialists and generally theologians, they cover a wider scientific

¹The atheist is a man who does not praise God nor see him in nature (Ein Atheist, IX, 427). Brockes considers it useless to try to convert atheists as God's "allgegenwärtige Schrift und Lehren" are clear and distinct (VI, 514).

²"Das Wasser," stanza 72, Metzler, p. 410.

field but dilute it.¹ Since the purpose is to celebrate God in creation, those aspects which give the best demonstrations of the wisdom, power and goodness of God are most favoured.² Even minor details like the salt of sea

¹William Derham, Physico-Theology or, a Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God from his Works of Creation, 8th ed. (London, 1732), Bk. III, ch. iv, p. 75 (this work will be abbreviated as Physico-Theology subsequently), recognizes the difficulty of understanding the problem of springs and states that "the Hills are a grand Agent in this prodigious Benefit to all the earth..." This capitulation of the understanding might almost be considered one of Brockes' poetic subjects. He frequently gives up the attempt to understand a particular problem and prefers to admire (Drey Reiche, pp. 67 and 115). Or else he renounces rather than fall into the sin of pride. "Wie das aber recht geschehe,/Sieht man zwar, doch fasst mans nicht./Ich aufs wenigste gestehe,/Daß mir hier die Kraft gebricht,/Und will lieber dieß bekennen,/Als mich von der Wahrheit trennen./Denn nur Stoltz und Eitelkeit/Suchen falsche Dunckelheit" (Die Erde, stanza 71). This stanza is on page 598 of the Metzler edition which is a misprint for 588.

²God's wise distribution of water in the world is a favorite topic. Derham: "Besides their absolute Necessity, and great Use to the World, there are several Topics, from whence the Waters may be demonstrated to be GOD's Work; as, the creating so vast a Part of our Globe; the placing it commodiously therein, and giving it Bounds; the Methods of keeping it sweet and clean, by its Saltness, by the Tides, and Agitations by the Winds; the making the Waters useful to the Vegetation of Plants, and for Food to Animals, by the noble Methods of sweetening them; and many other Things besides, which are insisted on in that Part of my Survey" (Physico-Theology, Bk. IX, ch. ii, p. 400, footnote). Brockes has devoted a long poem of 78 stanzas to this subject (Das Wasser, Metzler, pp. 386-412). In stanzas 13 and 17 he also deals with the vastness of the sea but instead of saying that it has no fixed bounds he declares that only God knows its bounds. Derham's idea that the tides and the winds keep the water clean is also found in Pluche and Brockes: "Fernere Betrachtung des der Erde so nützlichen Weltmeers" (VI, 427) which Brockes adapted from Noël Antoine Pluche, Le Spectacle de la Nature ou Entretiens sur les particularités de l'histoire naturelle. I am using the following editions: vol. I, 1732; II, 1735; III, 1735; IV, 1739. The work will be referred to in future references as "Pluche." Pluche deals with this subject in vol. III, "La Mer," dialogue, xxii, pp. 129 ff.

water is considered an admirable proof of God's goodness.¹ Such subjects are very common and are found in most of the works with an apologetic trend.

Brockes' earlier scientific poems "Regen," "Wasser," "Feuer," "Erde," "Luft," "Die fünf Sinne," and a few others, also deal with these subjects, and certain sections sound like a versification of these writers. Isolated ideas can be traced to individual writers but no complete poem. Brockes appears to be piecing together and developing their ideas to form his own poems. The inspiration and the mood are the same. We know that he was interested in this genre as he mentions the names of several such authors throughout his works. He also adapted material from Pluche's Spectacle de la Nature which is similar to the works of Ray and Derham. Pluche's list of sources also qualifies him for a place in the development we are investigating:

Les ouvrages dont nous nous sommes le plus servis
pour nous instruire & pour autoriser nos remarques,
sont l'excellente histoire & les mémoires de
l'Académie des Sciences, les Transactions philo-
sophiques de la Société de Londres, les Traités
de Malpighi, de Rédi, de Willughbi, de Leeuwen-
hoek, de Grew, de Nieuwentit, de Derham, &c.
(Pluche, vol. I, preface p. xvi)

The way in which these writers exploit the knowledge which they have gained from such sources is worth

¹Brockes writes: 'Nichts zeigt deutlicher und besser/Gottes Lieb' und weise Macht,/Als daß er ins See=Gewässer/Solch ein fruchtbar Saltz gebracht,/Welches, wenn es durch die Enge/Der verborg'nen Erden=Gänge,/Drin sichs säubert, durchgerollt,/Reines Saltz der Erden zollt'(Das Wasser, stanza 21). Almost all writers agree that the sea is salty to save it from putrefaction. Nieuwentijdt, The Religious Philosopher: or, the Right Use of Contemplating the Works of the Creator, trans. John Chamberlayne, 2nd ed. (London, 1719), p. 96.

considering. The utilitarian aspect is stressed, since it reveals the goodness of God. They are interested, for example, in rain for the glory of God rather than for the subject itself: "This Distribution of the Clouds and Rain is to me (I say) a great Argument of Providence and Divine Disposition..."¹ Brockes, who was writing the poem "Der Regen" (pp. 436-440) "Zu des weisen Schöpfers Ehr'," ends with the stanza:

Mensch, erwege doch und mercke,
Nebst des Schöpfer Lieb' und Gunst, [sic]
Seine weise Wunder=Stärcke,
Der, wie eine Wasser=Kunst,
Die so schwere Fluth regieret,
Sie bald auf= bald abwärts führet,
Und dadurch die schöne Welt
In der Fruchtbarkeit erhält.
(Metzler, p. 440)

Derham's discussion of atmosphere in the chapter "Clouds and Rain" is typical:

And now, if we reflect upon this necessary Appendage of the Terraqueous Globe, the Atmosphere, and consider the absolute Necessity thereof to many uses of our Globe, and its great Convenience to the whole: And in a Word, that it answereth all the Ends and Purposes that we can suppose there can be for such an Appendage: Who can but own this to be the Contrivance, the Work of the Great Creator? Who would ever say or imagine such a Body, so different from the Globe it serves, could be made by Chance, or be adapted so exactly to all those fore-mentioned grand Ends, by any other Efficient than by the Power and Wisdom of the infinite God!

(Bk. I, ch. iii, p. 25)

Brockes' account of rain is similar to Ray's. Both consider what would happen if rain fell in a great mass instead of in drops. Ray writes:

If we consider the Manner of the Rain's Descent, distilling down gradually, and by Drops, which is most convenient for the watering of the Earth;

¹John Ray, Wisdom of God, p. 84.

whereas, if it should fall down in a continual Stream like a River, it would gall the Ground, wash away Plants by the Roots, overthrow Houses, and greatly incommode, if not suffocate, Animals: If, I say, we consider these Things; and many more that might be added; we might in this Respect also cry out with the Apostle, 'O the Depth of the Riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God!'¹

Brockes writes:

Alles aber würd' ersaufen,
Brechen und zu trümmern gehn,
Wenn der Wolcken Fluht mit Haufen
Von den ungeheuren Höhn,
Als ein' allzuschwere Bürde,
Unzertheilet fallen würde;
Wenn ein dicker Wasser=Schwall
Uns bedeckt' überall.
(Stanza 5)

This idea is not present in Derham. But Derham considers other points absent from Ray yet used by Brockes--rain refreshes, waters plants and trees, and produces fountains and rivers. If Brockes has used these writers as his source, then he has quite successfully blended their ideas to make a poem. The Drey Reiche is more coldly scientific apart from the enthusiastic pious exclamations, while here, Brockes has introduced poetic elements which he has fused with the scientific. The rising vapours are woven like a cloth by the heat of the sun, are wafted in the thin air and formed like mountains, silver and golden against the sapphire sky. The raindrops are personified and request man to note in them God's love and power. The use of onomatopoeia and kinetic vocabulary transforms dull geographical data into an experience which the observer perceives through all his senses (Stanza 11).

¹Ibid.

Not all of Brockes' scientific materials have been successfully converted into poems. "Die Luft" (Metzler, pp. 30-56), apart from the opening and concluding stanzas with the usual concessions to God, consists of 79 stanzas of scientific material. That this material is drawn from the apologist tradition we are considering is apparent from the form in which it is presented. It is the use of a type of hypothetical argument typical of the school and demonstrates mainly that this is the best of all creations. Everything has been carefully calculated by the Great Architect so that all is in exactly the right place. If the sun were closer to the earth it would scorch it and if it were further away the earth would freeze. If the clouds, which float above as reservoirs, were to fall they would destroy. These ideas are found in Fénelon¹ but are not peculiar to him.² Ray speaks similarly of the sun's being "the very Life of this inferior World, without whose salutary and vivifick Beams, all Motion, both Animal, Vital and Natural, would speedily cease, and nothing be left here below but Darkness and Death."³

¹François de Salignac de la Motte-Fénelon, Oeuvres Philosophiques, ou Demonstration de l'Existence de Dieu..., new ed. (Amsterdam, 1721), pt. I, section xi, "De la Terre." The work was originally published in 1712. According to Hans Fromm, Bibliographie deutscher Übersetzungen aus dem Französischen 1700-1948 (Baden-Baden, 1951) it was translated into German in 1714.

²William Whiston, A new theory of the Earth from its original to the Consummation of all Things..., 3rd ed. (London, 1722), p. 72.

³Ray, Wisdom of God, p. 64.

Brockes writes in his poem "Die Sonne":

Dann, wann sich dein Strahl entfernt,
Stirbet die gefror'ne Welt,
Draus man augenscheinlich lernet,
Daß nur er die Welt erhält.
(Metzler, pp. 180 ff., stanza 30)

Brockes says of the clouds in the poem "Die Luft":

Dieser Nutz ist unbeschreiblich.
Fiel der Wolcken Last herab;
Fünden wir unhintertreiblich
Ein beeistes plötzlichs Grab
In derselben Eingeweide.
Bäume, Felsen und Gebäude
Würden unter sich gedrückt,
Und was lebte, würd' erstickt.
(Metzler, p. 41, stanza 33)

Man can take consolation that this catastrophe will never happen because God in his wisdom is in control of the clouds so that the rain falls in drops and the world is not flooded.

In the eighteenth century mountains were generally considered as blemishes. Thomas Burnet¹ devised a theory to explain God's apparent error in creating them. A controversy raged, in the course of which, writers whose aim was to draw attention to the perfection of God through the perfection of creation strove to find as many positive features as possible in the "hideous" mountains. Equipped with Aristotle's dictum that Nature does nothing in vain (De Coelo I, 4), they scoured the universe for lessons on its utility. Quite naturally, in the case of mountains, there was a tendency to exaggerate their utility as a weapon in the battle.

¹Thomas Burnet, The Sacred Theory of the Earth was first published in Latin in 1681 and translated in 1684. Marjorie Hope Nicolson, Mountain Gloom and Mountain Glory (New York, 1963) deals with the changing attitude to mountains from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century. These books will be abbreviated as "Burnet" and "Mountain Gloom" respectively. I am using the 6th edition of Burnet (1726).

Derham, Ray and several others, in their discussion of mountains, start by attacking Burnet, then give their own arguments. Derham (Bk. III, ch. iv) uses some of Ray's ideas and adds some of his own. Mountains (1) are salubrious, (2) provide shelter from the cold, (3) produce herbs and trees, (4) harbour birds, beasts and insects (even on the highest peaks), (5) condense vapours which turn into rain (this makes the torrid zone habitable), (6) contain minerals, metals and underground treasures, (7) provide fountains and rivers.

Pluche (III, dial. xix) discusses at length the condensation of vapours in the mountains and its usefulness for man and beast. John Edwards¹ rejects Burnet's attitude to mountains and explains that they provide underground channels supplying water for man and beast. John Woodward,² after opposing Burnet, gives some of his own ideas on the usefulness of mountains--water rises from the abyss to supply springs; fissures let water through and also serve as receptacles for metals; mountains prevent water from stagnating and also form rivers. Fénelon discusses the uses of high mountains and sees them mainly as sources of supplies of stone, marble, minerals, plants, fruit-trees, water and food for man (pt. I, section xi).

Brookes brings in many of these points when he writes poems about mountains.³ He also mentions Burnet,

¹A Demonstration of the Existence and Providence of God from the Contemplation of the Visible Structure of the Greater and Lesser World (London, 1690), p. 107 and p. 114.

²An Essay toward a Natural History of the Earth: and Terrestrial Bodies especially Minerals..., 2nd ed. (London, 1702), p. 146 and pp. 148-150.

³"Die Berge" (Metzler, pp. 124-131) and a section of "Sonntagslied" (VIII, 399).

not to discredit him but to borrow his picture of mountains as terrifying ruins, a picture which clashes with the almost pastoral scene following; there are forests for fuel, grazing cows, corn which ripens quickly because of its closeness to the sun,¹ rich vines providing wine, precious metals and marble.

The discovery of the background of Brockes' mountain poems will enable us, in a later chapter, to interpret them and draw more valid conclusions. In fact, the entire background which has been sketched up to this point should help us to see Brockes' poems as part of a larger perspective. The emphasis on the usefulness of creation which seems strange and rather amusing to modern readers is only one aspect of the vision of creation as the book of God, a demonstration of the being and attributes of God. It shows that God is wise because everything which he has created from a fly to a mountain serves a useful purpose. It shows that God is bountiful and loving because he is attentive to man's needs. This last idea is linked to a view held by Brockes and this group of writers that man is the crown of creation for whom the world was made.²

¹The idea that the tops of mountains are warmer because they are closer to the sun is also found in Seneca: Physical Science in the Time of Nero, being a Translation of the Questiones Naturales of Seneca, trans. John Clarke (London, 1910), Bk. IV.

²Pluche also holds that the world was created for man: "C'est pour lui que le soleil se leve [sic], c'est pour lui que les étoiles brillent; & si les corps les plus éloignés de lui le servent si régulièrement, à plus forte raison ce qui a été placé auprès de lui est-il destiné pour son usage" (Pluche II, dial. i).

It enters into much of the poetry of the period. Brockes' poem "Fragen" (VI, 135, Tübingen) is typical:

Für wen beblümen sich die Felder?
Für wen belauben sich die Wälder?
Für wen sprießt, durch der Sonnen Stral,
Der Kräuter Menge sonder Zahl?
Für wen hört man der Vögel Singen
So lieblich und so süß erklingen?

The questions continue to flow. The answer is:

Für dich, o Mensch, nur bloß allein...

Not all of the writers we have been discussing agree about the purpose of creation. Even Brockes himself, who is quite convinced that the world was made for man, has other views at times. To a certain extent it is a matter of viewpoint. From the mundane point of view, the world is seen to supply man with the necessities of life. From a theological standpoint it is God who is the centre. If man is placed in his cosmic setting, becoming a mere speck, then his place is more problematical.

Brockes' view that the world was made for man is linked with his idea of God the supplier not only of material needs like food and clothing. God has given us a beautiful world with the capacity to enjoy it by means of the senses. Not only is the enjoyment of God's gifts a duty but a form of praise:

Seht denn alles, was ihr sehet,
Mit vergnügtem Hertzen an!
Gott wird besser nicht erhöht,
Als wenn man, was Er gethan,
Mit zufried'ner Seele preiset,
Ihm ein danckbar's Hertze weiset,
Und auf Seine Lieb' und Macht
Voller Freud' und Ehrfurcht acht't.

Gebt durch Danck= und Freuden=Lieder
Und mit immer frohem Sinn

Diesem grossen Geber wieder,
Was er euch gegeben, hin,
Anders will ja Gott nichts haben,
Als daß ihr die Wunder=Gaben,
Die Er euch aus Gnaden schenckt,
Mit vergnügtem Sinn bedenckt.

("Das Wasser" stanzas 74-75, Metzler, pp. 410-411)

But even this view of creation has to be supplemented by the theological background which will be investigated in the next chapter.

Further information about the animal poems at the end of the Drey Reiche will also provide a more accurate assessment of a much-maligned aspect of Brockes' work. These poems have been given, time and again, as examples of the kind of thing which Brockes wrote¹ and the theory that the Irdisches Vergnügen is "ein gereimter physico-theologischer Beweis" draws on them for evidence.

Brockes devotes several pages to listing and classifying animals, then deals with individual animals. The following example will give some idea of the style:

Der Luchs

Auch der Luchs ist schön und schädlich. Er ist voller
Raubbegier;
Aber dennoch ist es uns ebenfalls ein nützlichs Thier.
Zwischen Katzen und dem Tiger scheint's ein Mittelthier
zu seyn;
Seine Haut ist gelblichfleckig, auch wohl etwas grau
zuweilen:
Sie sind aus der Maaßen fertig, ihre Speise zu ereilen,
Sehn so scharf, als sonst kein Tier. Zwischen Bergen,
Fels und Stein
Leben meist die Katzenluchse, wenn die Kälberluchs'
hingegen
In den dickverwachs'nen Wäldern insgemein zu wohnen
pflegen.
Für die Schwerenoth und Krampf wird die Luchsklau' uns
verschrieben;
Und mit ihren Bälgen werden große Handlungen getrieben.
(IX, 278)

¹Gerhard Fricke, Geschichte der deutschen Dichtung (Tübingen, 1949), pp. 110-111.

This unpoetic, proselike account of the lynx is obviously intended to be informative although there is a dearth of information in this particular example. The unstated primary aim is the glorification of God by the description and observation of his works. There is nothing scientific here, nothing about the latest experiments on the anatomy of animals. This is neither the style of the Royal Society nor of the so-called physico-theologists. Nor is the poem an attempt to demonstrate the generosity of God through the utility of animals. The fact that the lynx's skin is commercially valuable is stated as information. The whole thing reads like an entry in a guide to animals or Pliny's Natural History purged of its griffins and sphinxes.¹

Perhaps the most influential contributor to the zoological compendia is Konrad Gesner (1516-1565),² a genius who is practically unknown. Scholarship has neglected him although his contributions to many disciplines must be considerable. He interests us not merely in the present context as a possible source for Brockes' zoology, but as a precursor of eighteenth-century ideas. For the moment his Historia Animalium (1551-1558) is relevant. It covered quadrupeds, birds and fishes and was translated into German and into English. If Brockes was acquainted with it, he would probably have used the German Thierbuch.

¹There is a very informative chapter on the encyclopedic tradition in Kester Svendsen, Milton and Science (Harvard, 1956), pp. 9-42. M. St Clare Byrne, The Elizabethan Zoo, a Book of Beasts both Fabulous and Authentic (London, 1925) illustrates the tradition.

²Bodenheimer, op.cit., p. 94.



Gesner has been called the German Pliny, but his work is more comprehensive than Pliny's, since he has not only gathered together the reports of the authorities who preceded him, but has added much from his own personal knowledge and observation. He discusses the same animals as Brockes and many more, several of which are fabulous. They are presented alphabetically under eight sections: (a) name in different languages; (b) habitat; description of parts; (c) natural function of the body; (d) qualities of the soul; (e) use to man; (f) utility as food; (g) use as medicine; (h) poetic and philosophical speculations about the animal; anecdotes about the animal from other writers.

This is the form Brockes' animal poems take although his material is scant. It is not possible to discover whether Gesner was his source but it is to the Pliny-Gesner tradition that Brockes belongs. From this, the utilitarian conclusion is seen to be part of the general encyclopaedic aim.¹ Gesner and Brockes are merely telling us all they know about animals. Their main premise is not that animals are made to serve man but simply that animals exist and are worth describing.

It is interesting to discover from Gesner's preface that his aim in describing animals is to glorify God. Beasts are "honorable emblems of Divine and supernatural wisdom," "evident testimonies of divinity" and "every story

¹David Friedrich Strauß, Gesammelte Schriften (Bonn, 1876) uses these poems to support what he considers is the essence of Brockes' work--"Natursystem von Mitteln und Zwecken" (p. 4). He discusses a considerable number of them and maintains that Brockes emphasizes their uses as pleasant meat, useful skins and medicines.

of a beast is like a severall Hymne, to praise the Divine Wisdome and goodnes, from which as from a pure ever-springing-fountaine, proceed and flow all good, beautifull, and wise actions." Topsell,¹ who collected and arranged this English version of Gesner, says in his own preface that the book is for delight so that the reader can "passe away the Sabbaoths in heavenly meditations upon earthly creatures," because "science is Divine and ought of all men to be inquired and sought after."

All this is in harmony with Brockes' own attitude to the study of creation. In fact, Gesner's entire preface² is reminiscent of the commonplaces of the books we have been considering as Brockes' context. For instance, he finds that the wonderful instincts³ which animals display in providing food and shelter for themselves and their young testify to the wisdom of God. The following passage resembles the writings of Derham, Ray, Brockes, etc. except that the attitude to putrefaction has changed with the discoveries of the microscopists:

For how can his Diuine power, wisdom, and goodnesse, euer be absent from the world, (I meane from man the prince of the world) when such excellent gifts are made visible in little beasts, that euerie day perish and

¹Edward Topsell, The History of Foure-footed Beastes (London, 1607).

²I am quoting from Topsell since the various editions of the German Thierbuch which I consulted did not have this preface. It is in the original Latin edition.

³This view of instinct in the animal world is found in Brockes, Thomson, Fénelon, Ray, Addison, Ewald von Kleist and many others.

are corrupted easily, and ingendered againe by their owne putrifaction, so as they neuer faile in kind, euen tho that are so smal & little in body, that they can scarce be seen by the eies of man? these things are to me vnanswerable arguments of the presence and power of God.

Brockes and Gesner agree in spirit and intention, form and narrative method (Gesner writes in prose) but there are divergencies in the factual content. Gesner is naturally more prolific and specialized. Although Brockes has the advantage of an extra 150 years of scientific progress since Gesner's time, there are few signs of it in this group of poems. In fact, sometimes he seems quite backward, as is the case with his poem on the chameleon (IX, 294) in which he tells us that the whole eye moves. Gesner¹ in his discussion of the chameleon gives this view and those of his predecessors, views which Charles Perrault² in a more recent account finds inadequate since they fail to mention the unusual motion of the chameleon's eyes. He outlines his own observations and points out that each eye is able to look in a different direction. Brockes does not mention this and seems to be relying on the Gesner-Pliny³ version.

If Brockes had based his animal poems on the Thierbuch he might have produced better poems. All we can be sure of is that they belong to the encyclopaedic tradi-

¹Conrad Gesner...Historiae animalium Liber II qui est de Quadrupedibus Oviparis (Frankfurt, 1586), p. 5 section b and p. 6 section c.

²Description anatomique d'un cameleon (Paris, 1669), pp. 15-16.

³Pliny's Natural History, A Translation on the Basis of that by Dr. Philemon Holland 1601 (London, 1847-48), Bk. VIII, ch. xxxiii, p. 60. "...there is no Motion in the Pupil when it looketh about, but it views Things by moving the whole Ball of his Eye."

tion and are not physico-theological arguments. It is inevitable that works with the same intention will produce a similar form. The subject determines it also. This kind of treatment of the chameleon, for example, will include the question of its ability to change colour, the unusual motion of its eyes, and its agile tongue. Modern encyclopaedias follow the same pattern.

In this chapter on "Brockes and Science" I have not regarded similarities between Brockes and other writers as conclusive evidence in the investigation of sources except where Brockes actually mentions names (Burnet and Pluche). There are many reasons for this. Within the writings of those who shared Brockes' aim of investigating God in his creation I discovered the same ideas. They were also present in the periodical literature of the time and seemed to enjoy considerable popularity. The possibility of oral sources could not be excluded either. Brockes took a degree in law at the University of Leyden in 1704/5. Leyden was a centre of enthusiasm for these ideas. Hermann Boerhaave¹ was famous for his botany courses in which he continuously expressed his admiration for the wonders of creation. Enthusiastic disciples gathered round him. Others

¹Hermann Boerhaave (1668-1738), Professor of Botany and medicine. Hélène Metzger, Newton, Stahl, Boerhaave et la doctrine chimique (Paris, 1930), p. 310. Albert Cherel, Fénelon au XVIII^e siècle en France, (1715-1820), son prestige--son influence (Paris, 1917), p. 78.

devoted themselves to private research.¹ Brockes could also have obtained information and material from other contacts. Albrecht von Haller (1708-1777) had studied under Boerhaave and was said to have been influenced by him.² Hagedorn was in contact with English culture as he had spent two years in England as Private Secretary to the Danish Ambassador. He could have acquainted Brockes with cultural developments in England and even passed on books and periodicals.

The important thing is to establish the context and the stream of ideas to which a work belongs. This gives a wider picture and deeper understanding. In cases where the exact source can be traced, the problem is often pushed back one step and the hunt for other sources renewed. A thorough study of a period generally reveals that the task of apportioning credit for an idea or theme is very complex. Not only does one find that the ideas abound

¹Brockes in his poem "Sinnreiche Bestrafung der Unachtsamkeit" depicts Anderson, "Der edlen Hammon-Stadt berühmter Bürgermeister" looking through his microscope (Metzler, p. 483). Alois Brandl, Barthold Heinrich Brockes (Innsbruck, 1878), p. 71 f. tells us about Anderson's large insect collection and Carpser's anatomical museum where Brockes was introduced to the art of dissecting (Ird. Verg. VI, 272, 330). Brockes also had his own collection (Ird. Verg. VI, 401). Brandl writes of Brockes: "Aber auch wissenschaftliche Kenntnisse jeder Art wollte er lieber im mündlichen Verkehr als aus Büchern sich aneignen..." The three poems mentioned by Brandl are interesting. "Gedancken bey der Section eines Cörpers" describes Brockes' reaction to an anatomical demonstration by Peter Carpser, Brockes' family doctor. Brandl is using the Tübingen edition. The Hamburg reference is VI, 298. The next poem, "Betrachtungen aus der Anatomie," is concerned with the description of anatomical specimens from Carpser's collection (VI, 364, Hamburg). "Die Werkstatt der Seelen" describes a skull from Brockes' own collection (VI, 446, Hamburg).

²Howard Mumford Jones, "Albrecht Haller and English Philosophy," PMLA, XL (1925), p. 104.

in minor works but that they may be said to be in the air.

As far as Brockes is concerned, this chapter has established that the source of the scientific poems is the stream of ideas represented by the group of scientists and divines¹ whose work we have referred to throughout. The evidence is the way in which their intentions and premises tally and consequently the results. This is further confirmed by the fact that many of their names are mentioned by Brockes himself in the text and by his editors in their prefaces.²

The preface to volume II of the Irdisches Vergnügen by C.F. Weichmann is particularly important. He quotes at length from Arndt's Vom Wahren Christenthum since he apparently admires its intention--"Die Betrachtung der Weißheit Gottes in den Creaturen." Then he complains that Arndt has been dead for 100 years and that, since then, little or nothing of this nature has appeared in German except for works by Dillherr, Sriver, Scheuchzer, Löscher and Triller. On the other hand, the French and the Dutch are rich in such writing but more especially the English. He tells us that translations of these works are now being made. Matthiew Hale's Vom Ursprung des Menschengeschlechts has already been translated, Wollaston's book on natural religion is in the process of being translated and Brockes is working on Genest's Principes de Philosophie.

¹Boyle, Grew, Swammerdam, Leeuwenhoek, Woodward, Nieuwentijdt, Derham, Ray, Whiston, Fénelon, Pluche, Edwards. Bentley, and Burnet with reservations.

²The third stanza of a poem by Krüsike (Ird. Verg., vol. II, Preface) praises Brockes' poetry and writes of it: "Dieß ists, was Parcker's, Grew's and Edward's Eifer treibet, / Und der gelehrte Kiel des scharfen Derham's schreibet: / Doch Brockes Trefflichkeit entdeckt die größte Pracht."

He emphasizes that Brockes has made a great contribution to German culture by introducing such works in his Irdisches Vergnügen. The way in which Brockes has managed to combine science and theology for our edification he finds particularly admirable. Other prefaces¹ make it perfectly clear, in extravagant eulogies of Brockes, that he owed his success to this, and to the way in which he revealed God in creation.

Brockes and his friends, therefore, were interested in all works which professed to seek God in the external world. This is the school with which they identify themselves. Until now it has not been regarded as such and has no name. In English literature recent research refers to writers like Ray and Derham as "physico-theologists" but I have preferred not to use the term. Besides being vague, it has negative associations which could prejudice my attempt to present as faithfully as possible ideas which inspired Brockes. Lovejoy writes:

The 'physico-theology' so much beloved by the writers of works of edification, deistic as well as orthodox, was in intent a proof of the existence of God; but it was in effect a glorification of man. For it rested in great part upon the supposition that all other created beings exist for man's sake. Tout est créé pour l'homme is at once the tacit premise and the triumphant conclusion of that long series of teleological arguments which constitutes so large a fraction of the 'philosophical' output of the eighteenth century--and is one of the most curious monuments of human imbecility.²

¹C.F. Weichmann, Poesie der Nieder-Sachsen (Hamburg, 1725) writes in his dedication to Brockes (signed October, 1721): "Ihre Poesie führet von den Lastern zur Tugend, von der Welt zu Gott, von dem Irdischen zum Himmlischen." D.W. Triller, Poetische Betrachtungen (Hamburg, 1725), vol. I in his dedication to Brockes praises the way in which Brockes' works reveal the Creator.

²Lovejoy, p. 186.

Yet many of these writers were men of learning and of considerable intellectual ability who should not be divorced from their cultural climate. Perhaps we should also bear in mind that they were explorers seeing for the first time things which are all too familiar to us.

The writers mentioned by Weichmann seem to form for him one group because of their common aim of seeking God in creation. Yet, they go their separate ways. Arndt moves from the "Creaturen" to theological questions (eternity of God, corruptibility of the earth). Like Brockes, he considers the immensity of the sea as a "Wunderwerck" revealing the greatness of God, but it is also an "Angstmeer und Gnadenmeer." This emphasis together with a strong mystical bias distinguishes his work from that of Brockes. The same is true of Sriver whose emblems concentrate on the next world at the expense of the temporal. Brockes does the opposite. Genest shares certain themes with Brockes, but the Cartesian philosophy which predominates changes the tone.

Brockes and those with whom I have associated him start with the same aim as the writers mentioned by Weichmann but the final product is quite different. They can therefore be considered as a different branch of the larger group. Since their aims, themes and treatment coincide, it is against this background that Brockes' scientific poems must be placed. Far from rejecting them as unworthy of consideration we should regard them as the spring-board of his poetic activity.

CHAPTER III

THE THEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND OF BROCKES' SCIENTIFIC POEMS

In the last chapter, I suggested that Brockes had obtained the material for his scientific poems either directly or indirectly from a group of scientists and divines in France, Holland and England whose main interest was to demonstrate the existence and attributes of God from the works of creation. I attempted to show that science and religion were so closely related in the work of this group as to be inseparable. If this is true, then Brockes' attitude to religion could be the same as theirs.

In the Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott there is almost no reference to orthodox Christianity. Brockes writes about God the Creator rather than about Christ the Saviour. There is practically no mention of Christian doctrines like original sin and redemption. The "God" of the scientific poems resembles the Old Testament God in the characteristics of love, wisdom, goodness and power, but not of jealousy, wrath and retribution. Brockes frequently quotes texts from the Bible and the Apokrypha, especially as an introduction to a poem. "Die Sonne" (I, 116) has texts from Ecclesiastes and Ecclesiasticus: "Eccl. XI, 7. Es ist das Licht süß, und den Augen lieblich, die Sonne zu sehen. Sir. XLIII, 2. Sie ist ein Wunder=Werck des Höchsten." "Das Wasser" (Metzler, p. 386) is introduced by Psalm civ. 25-26: "Das Meer, das so groß und weit ist, da wimmelts ohne Zahl, beyde groß= und kleine Thiere.

Daselbst geben die Schiffe, da sind Wall=Fische, die Du gemacht hast, daß sie darin schertzen." The poem itself develops the themes of these verses--the vastness of the sea and the quantity of sea creatures.

Most of the other writers (Ray, Derham, etc.) also introduce biblical texts, often to reinforce their arguments and give them authority.¹ These are generally from the Old Testament but, where appropriate, New Testament texts are quoted. Derham in his chapter "Of the Food of Animals" uses Luke xii.24: "Consider the ravens; for they neither sow nor reap, which neither have storehouse nor barn, and God feedeth them." Also Psalm civ. 27-28: "These wait all upon thee, that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That thou givest them, they gather; thou openest thy hand, they are filled with good." Other references to God as the provider (Brockes' "Speisemeister") are Psalm cxlv. 15-16; Job xxxviii. 41; Psalm cxlvii. 9.

Many writers find in the words of St Paul confirmation of their method of seeking truth in the external world: "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead" (Rom.i.20).² An analogy to that sense of the rich variety of created things which inspires Brockes' lengthy catalogues of stones, plants and vegetables is to be found in

¹C.F. Weichmann in his preface to volume II of Ird. Verg. refers to biblical texts. This is to protect Brockes from being accused of unorthodoxy in religious matters.

²This text is quoted very frequently.

Psalm civ. 24: "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches." Psalm cxi. illustrates the greatness of God's works and Psalm xix. 1, God's workmanship: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." Since admiration is linked with praise in the minds of Brockes and his group, Psalm cxlviii and many others are used to call on man to praise the Creator: "Praise ye the Lord from the heavens: praise him in the heights." The same texts are repeated from book to book.

It is important to realize that these texts, although unchanged from biblical times, have gathered through the centuries a wealth of association which changes the original idea. Psalm viii. 3-4: "When I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him?" conjures up an infinite universe, both frightening and exciting, for post-Copernican readers. The text has yet another meaning for us today in the space age.

Since biblical times, the idea of God has also changed. It has become more abstract through contact with Greek culture and lost some of its anthropomorphism.¹ Plato, Aristotle and the schools which they engendered have considerably modified the original conception. The Church Fathers have also added their commentaries. Therefore, to claim that Brockes and these other writers present the Hebrew God and Hebrew themes in their work is an

¹"God" in The Jewish Encyclopedia.

oversimplification. Only a study of the context of their works will reveal some of the complexities of the theology.

Brockes himself may not have been aware of the deeper theological implications of his vocabulary, but no discussion of his religious ideas can afford to neglect them. Hans M. Wolff, dealing with aspects of Brockes' religion, notes the "Bibelgläubigkeit" and that Brockes "wiederholt Anklänge an die Bibel in seine Gedichte hineinarbeitet, nicht nur, indem er Gott zuweilen mit biblischen Namen anredet, sondern indem er ihm darüberhinaus die Eigenschaften zuschreibt, von denen die Bibel berichtet: er nennt ihn Gott, bei dem im Anfang der Dinge das Wort war, bzw. der selber das Wort war; Gott hat die Welt durch jenes geheimnisvolle ‚Es werde‘ erschaffen und erhält sie auch nach der Schöpfung noch durch eben dieses Wort; er hat die Materie aus dem Nichts geschaffen etc."¹ Wolff, however, does not consider the theological implications of these observations as he is concerned with Brockes' relationship to Protestantism.

Brockes' religious language in his scientific poems, with the exception of parts of "Die Sonne," is the same as the language used by writers like Derham, Ray and Bentley. In their work, the more complex field of associations can best be observed.

According to them, God's spoken word or fiat constituted the act of creation: "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made..." (Psalm xxxiii). This is one of Brockes' motifs. The following example is from "Das Wasser

¹Hans M. Wolff, Die Weltanschauung der deutschen Aufklärung in geschichtlicher Entwicklung (Bern, 1949), p. 134.

im Frühling":

Gott, der durch ein Wort: Es werde!
Aller Himmel Himmel Pracht,
Stern' und Sonnen, Mond und Erde,
Gluht und Fluht hervor gebracht!
Alle Tropfen in den Bächen,
Ja so gar im tiefen Meer,
Hör' ich gleichsam rauschend sprechen:
Nur von GOTT kommt alles her.
Ihm allein sey Preis und Ehr'!¹
(Metzler, p. 18)

Richard Bentley in his Boyle lectures says that "it is most reasonable to believe, that the eternal and Self-existent God created the material World also, and produced it out of Nothing."² This ex nihilo theme³ is also found in Brockes' poetry concerning God, "der die Kreatur aus Nichts werden ließ" (IX, 334).⁴ It is interesting to note in passing that Milton, in Paradise Lost, has a different view, that God's act of creation consisted

¹Other examples: "Schönheit der Felder" (I, 41); in the poem "Vier besondere Wunder des Schöpfers von einer Höhe in Ritzbüttel," (VII, 14) Brockes writes: "Welch einen grossen Theil der schönen, durch GOTT allein erschaffnen, Welt,/Die, wie Sein grosses Wort sie schuff, Sein grosses Wort allein erhält,/Kan ich von dieser Höhe sehn!..." (VII, 14, Tübingen ed.)

²Lecture 6, p. 32.

³Among those who hold this view are: St Augustine, Tertullian, Aristides, Justin, Theophilus. Du Bartas uses the motif in his creation epic. Since the work contains many of the subjects which are most relevant to those treated by Brockes, it will be referred to frequently as La Sepmaine. It is divided into seven sections corresponding to the seven days of creation which will be numbered according to Roman numerals I-VII. Guillaume de Saluste Sieur Du Bartas, La Sepmaine ou Creation du Monde, critical text based on the Geneva edition of 1581, ed. Kurt Reichenberger (Tübingen, 1963), I, line 193.

⁴Sometimes Brockes uses the ex nihilo motif (Metzler, p. 167), sometimes God is described as bringing "Ordnung aus dem Chaos" (VII, 9).

of producing order out of chaos; this is Platonic:¹

I saw when at his Word the formless Mass,
This Worlds material mould, came to a heap:
Confusion heard his voice, and wilde uproar
Stood rul'd, stood vast infinitude confin'd;
Till at his second bidding darkness fled,
Light shon, and order from disorder sprung:
(P.L. III., lines 708 ff.)²

We must not consider the spoken word of God, the act of creation, in isolation. A complex web of associations, consisting of all the scientific demonstrations and apologetic arguments which we noted in the last chapter, forms round it. The following passage is at the end of a lecture which is largely scientific in its character and contents:

And thus we have competently shewn, that every Species of living Creatures, every small Insect, and even the Herbs of the Field give a casting vote against Atheism; and declare the necessity of a supernatural Formation. If the Earth in its first constitution had been left to its self, what horrid deformity and desolation had for ever overspread its face? not one living Inhabitant found on all its spacious surface; not so much as a Worm in the Bowels of it, nor one single Fish in the vast bosom of the Sea; not a Mantle of Grass or Moss, to cover and conceal the nakedness of Nature. An eternal Sterility must have possessed the World, where all things had been fixed and fasten'd everlastingly with the Adamantin chains of Specifick Gravity; if the Almighty had not spoken and said [my italics], Let the Earth bring forth Grass, the Herb yielding Seed, and the Fruit-tree yielding Fruit after its kind, and it was so.³

God's fiat is also brought in to explain what man himself cannot explain. One of these problems is that of

¹Martin A. Larson, "Milton and Servetus: A study in the Sources of Milton's Theology," PMLA, XLI (1926), 891-934. E.C. Baldwin, "Milton and Plato's Timaeus," PMLA, XXXV (1920), 210-217.

²All quotations from Milton's Paradise Lost are from The Poetical Works of John Milton, ed. Helen Darbishire, rev. ed. (Oxford, 1958).

³Bentley, Lecture 3, part II, p. 35.

motion. The ancients had also found God or Nature to be a useful explanation:

Cogitemus qui fieri possit, ut tanta magnitudo,
ab aliquâ possit naturâ, tanto tempore circumferri?
Ego igitur assero Deum causum esse, nec aliter posse fieri.¹

Burnet deals with this question also in his Sacred theory of the Earth:

The Question useth chiefly to be put concerning Motion, how it came into the World; what the first Source of it is, or how Matter came at first to be move'd?

Wherefore, if we find Motion and Action in Matter, which is of it self a dead inactive Mass; this should lead us immediately to the Author or Nature, or to some external Power distinct from Matter, which is the Cause of all Motion in the World.²

Bentley and Derham discuss the question of motion in a similar way. Derham's footnotes show that he is aware of the long tradition associated with the problem--he gives extracts from Plato, Aristotle and Cicero on the subject. Brockes, who is supposed to have read Derham,³ would therefore have the same associations. When Derham discusses gravity, "this noble contrivance" of the Creator which prevents "the Universe from shattering to Pieces,"⁴ he quotes Cicero's De Natura Deorum, section XLV:

What is most wonderful is, that the world is so durable, and so perfectly made for lasting that it is not to be impaired by time; for all its parts tend equally to the centre, and are bound together by a sort of chain, which surrounds the elements;

¹From Plato's Epinomis. Quoted by William Derham in Physico-Theology, Bk. II, ch. iii, p. 44, footnote.

²Burnet, vol. I, p. 403.

³Kupffer, p. 30.

⁴Physico-Theology, Bk. I, ch. v, p. 33.

this chain is nature, which being diffused through the universe, and performing all things with judgment and reason, attracts the extremities to the centre.

Derham concludes that all is kept in the proper place and order by gravity (p. 34). Psalm civ. 8-9 is given as biblical authority. Thus, Derham's practice is a very good illustration of the point I have been trying to make that biblical allusions have, in this period, little to do with their original background but have been modified in purport by the accumulated scientific knowledge and philosophical speculation of the centuries. The nucleus around which it has all gathered is the act of creation.

As the last examples have shown, God's fiat provides an explanation of the mysteries which the scientists and philosophers have been unable to penetrate. This is a weakness in their argument to which we will return later. Bentley (Lecture 2, p. 28) gives another example when, to confound atheists, Stoics and Cartesians, he demonstrates that "Sense and Perception can never be the product of any kind of Matter and Motion" but must be from "some Incorporeal Substance within us." Like Locke and Glanvill² he cannot go any further but simply concludes: "I resolve all that into the sole Pleasure and

¹The Treatises of M.T. Cicero on the Nature of the Gods..., trans. C.D. Yonge (London, 1853), section XLV, p. 87.

²"How any thought should produce a motion in body, is as remote from the nature of our ideas, as how any body should produce any thought in the mind" (Locke). "How the purer Spirit is united to this Clod, is a knot too hard for fallen Humanity to untie" (Glanvill). Quoted by Basil Willey, The seventeenth century Background (London, 1962), p. 269. Brookes also deals with this question in his Drey Reiche (IX, 115).

Fiat of our Omnipotent Creator..." (pp. 28-29).

So much for the mysterious, invisible aspect of creation as produced by God's word. Another branch is the visible creation to which Brockes and the others devote most of their observation and study, this masterpiece which reflects a Deity. This position has also been reached by a long process of accumulating thought from the words of Genesis, "and God saw that it was good." The goodness of creation is a prerequisite; Lucretius' world of imperfections is diametrically opposed to their philosophy which is why he and those who, like him, denied God's fiat and believed in chance, were the bêtes noires of the movement.

Fairly early in the history of thought, man notices the orderly arrangement of creation: "...one will find, if one is willing to reflect upon it, that it has all been arranged as well as possible."¹ This reflection leads to the idea of a mind, whether it be called Nous, God or Nature, which is responsible for the plan behind it all. As we see, the idea of teleology develops early.

Nous, according to Anaxagoras (c. 500-428 B.C.), has ordered everything from the beginning according to a pre-conceived world-plan and imparted motion to pre-existent chaos. It is not quite clear from the surviving writings whether Nous can be equated with the Deity, but Jaeger thinks it probable on account of "the hymn-like form in which the predicates of Nous are expressed, and

¹Diogenes of Apollonia, quoted by Werner Jaeger, The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers, The Gifford Lectures 1936 (Oxford, 1947), p. 165.

even from the content of these statements."¹ It is interesting to note that Anaxagoras resembles Bentley in the use he makes of Nous as "a deus ex machina, to account for the formation of the cosmos or for phenomena that he could not explain on mechanical grounds."²

Diogenes of Apollonia has similar ideas although he associates God with air and is more pantheistic than Anaxagoras:³

And it seems to me that that which has the power of knowing...is the thing that men call air, and that it steers all things and controls all things. For I feel that this is God, and that it extends everywhere and disposes all things and is contained in all things. And there is nothing that does not have a share in it.⁴

Fulton's summary of the teleology of Socrates in the Phaedo and Memorabilia resembles the thought of Brockes, Pluche and several others:

The whole world of nature is said to show traces of design, as appears in particular from the wonderful adaptations of means to end in the structure of the human body, in man's psychical constitution, and in

¹Ibid., p. 161.

²William Fulton, Nature and God: an Introduction to Theistic Studies with special Reference to the Relations of Science and Religion (Edinburgh, 1927), p. 220. Aristotle made this accusation. Jaeger (p. 163) also makes this point: "The mechanism of the creative vortical motion is the ingenious device by which Anaxagoras, like other of his contemporaries, tried to explain the formation of the world. The fact that he made the divine Mind guide the vortex in a specific direction gave his physics its new teleological aspect." This caused Aristotle to observe that Anaxagoras "employed Nous only in his cosmogony and in certain instances where he was at a loss for a mechanical explanation and had to fall back on it, if only as a deus ex machina."

³Fulton, op.cit., p. 220.

⁴Jaeger, op.cit., pp. 165-166.

the phenomena of external nature; and furthermore, all is designed towards the end of the advantage and well-being of men. Plants exist for the lower animals, and the lower animals for the sake of man.¹

The Stoics also have many ideas which we find in our eighteenth-century writers--order and harmony in the world, the adaptations of means to end. Cleanthes says that what leads men to God is "the uniformity of motion, the revolutions of the heavens, the grouping of the sun, and moon, and all the stars, their serviceableness, beauty and order, the mere appearance of which things would be sufficient indication that they were not the result of chance."²

Many of these ideas were collected by the eclectic Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 B.C.) and passed on to writers like Ray, Bentley and Derham. These were the same subjects which Brockes treated, especially in his scientific poems. They were influenced likewise by the physician Galen who was also in the Stoic stream of influence.³ In his work On the Uses of the Parts of the Body of Man he constantly points to the perfection of the human body as clear evidence of Deity.

The same arguments are found in the patristic period in the service of Christianity. Minucius Felix reproduces many of them and tells us that the very beauty of the human form proclaims the creative genius of God.⁴ Man's

¹Fulton, op.cit., pp. 221-222.

²Quoted by H.A. Wolfson in Philo: Foundations of Religious Philosophy in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam (Cambridge, Mass., 1947), vol. II, p. 76.

³Numerous references to Galen and Cicero indicate that these writers were important sources for Derham, Ray, and Bentley.

⁴Tertullian: Apologetical works, and Minucius Felix: Octavius, trans. Rudolf Arbesmann, Sister Emily Joseph Daly, Edwin A. Quain (New York, 1950), p. 351.

erect posture is a much-quoted proof of God's wisdom.¹

St Augustine tells us that "the human body is a revelation of the goodness of God" and that "the marvellous mobility of the tongue and hands [is] so perfectly suited for speaking and writing..."² According to A Learned summary upon the famous poem of William of Salust, Ferne-lius and Theoderet in their writings, and Basil and Ambrose in "their treatises of the Creation shew how Christians ought to be disposed, in considering the marvels of the Creator, in the structure and fabricke of man's body."³

Such admiration for divine workmanship in the structure of the body is one of the most common ingredients of practically all the works I have referred to so far: "The parts of a human body separately considered, are, as we have lately seen, so curiously framed, as to deserve to pass for excellent pieces of workmanship."⁴

¹Derham refers to this idea in his Physico-Theology (Bk. V, ch. ii, p. 282). In a footnote, he quotes Cicero's remarks on the subject from De Natura Deorum: "He [the Divinity] has made us of a stature tall and upright, in order that we might behold the heavens, and so arrive at the knowledge of the Gods; for men are not simply to dwell here as inhabitants of the earth, but to be, as it were, spectators of the heavens and the stars, which is a privilege not granted to any other kind of animated beings" (ed. cit., section LVI, p. 97). Ray, Wisdom of God, pp. 185-6, also quotes Cicero and mentions that the same idea is expressed by Ovid in his Metamorphoses. Ray himself writes: "Then, in general, I say, the Wisdom and Goodness of God appears in the erect Posture of the Body of Man, which is a Privilege and Advantage given to Man above other Animals..." Note also Milton, Paradise Lost VII, 506-510 on man: "...a Creature who not prone/And Brute as other Creatures, but endu'd/With Sanctitie of Reason, might erect/His Stature, and upright with Front serene/Govern the rest..." Supplementary examples are to be found in Jean Pépin, Théologie Cosmique et Théologie Chrétienne (Paris, 1964), p. 75.

²City of God, Bk. XXII, 484.

³Trans. [Thomas Lodge] (London, 1621), p. 283.

⁴Robert Boyle, "The Christian Virtuoso," in Works (London, 1744), vol. V, p. 703.

As in the example given from St Augustine it is often associated with the idea of how well the various organs are adapted to their functions.¹ These books declare, time and again, with the excitement the discovery of a new continent must arouse, how suitable the eye is for seeing. Bentley writes:

Or if the Eye were so acute, as to rival the finest Microscopes, and to discern the smallest Hair upon the leg of a Gnat, it would be a curse and not a blessing to us; it would make all things appear rugged and deformed; the most finely polished Crystal would be uneven and rough: The sight of our own selves would affright us....²

Brookes also feels that all is perfectly adapted to its function and explains how intolerable it would be if this were not so and our senses were more acute.

Sollten unsre Sinne taugen,
Tiefer, als sie thun, zu gehn,
Könnten wir durch unser' Augen
Als durch ein Vergröss=Glas sehn;
Würd' uns für uns selber grauen,
Sollten wir die Haut beschauen,
Die ja dann, als wie ein Bär,
Rauch und recht abscheulich wär'.
(Die fünf Sinne, st. 147, Metzler, p. 655)

These last examples show how a traditional view is enriched by scientific developments. The discovery of the

¹Ibid., p. 711.

²Bentley, lecture 2, Part I, p. 12. John Locke, An Essay concerning Human Understanding, ed. A.S. Pringle-Pattison (Oxford, 1924), Bk. II, ch. xxiii deals with this subject: "But were our senses altered, and made much quicker and acuter, the appearance and outward scheme of things would have quite another face to us; and I am apt to think, would be inconsistent with our being, or at least well-being, in this part of the universe which we inhabit." Pope also: "Say what the use, were finer optics given,/To inspect a mite, not comprehend the heaven?/Or touch, if trembling alive all o'er,/To smart and agonise at every pore?/Or quick effluvia darting through the brain,/Die of a rose in aromatic pain?/If Nature thunder'd in his opening ears,/And stunn'd him with the music of the spheres,/How would he wish that Heaven had left him still/The whisp'ring zephyr, and the purling rill?" (Pope, Essay on Man Epistle I, lines 195-204 in Alexander Pope's Collected Poems, ed. Bonamy Dobrée, Everyman revised edition, 1956).

microscope modifies thought. In the same way, Newton's discoveries and Harvey's ideas on the circulation of the blood are incorporated into these themes.

The following excerpt from Cicero's De Natura Deorum is full of thoughts which will later become commonplaces:

But if all the parts of the universe are so constituted that nothing could be better for use or beauty, let us consider whether this is the effect of chance, or whether, in such a state, they could possibly cohere, but by the direction of wisdom and divine providence. Nature therefore cannot be void of reason, if art can bring nothing to perfection without it, and if the works of nature exceed those of art. How is it consistent with common sense, that when you view an image or a picture, you imagine it is wrought by art; when you behold afar off a ship under sail, you judge it is steered by reason and art; when you see a dial or water-clock, you believe the hours are shown by art, and not by chance; and yet that you should imagine that the universe, which contains all arts and the artificers, can be void of reason and understanding? But if that sphere, which was lately made by our friend Posidonius, the regular revolutions of which show the course of the sun, moon, and five wandering stars, as it is every day and night performed, were carried into Scythia or Britain, who, in those barbarous countries, would doubt that that sphere had been made so perfect by the exertion of reason?

Yet these people doubt whether the universe, from whence all things arise and are made, is not the effect of chance, or some necessity, rather than the work of reason and a divine mind.

Some of the main ideas of Brockes and the other writers are present in this extract--the utility and beauty of the world is not the work of chance but of an intelligent artist who is the Prime Mover. Cicero also touched

¹Ed.cit., sections xxxiv-xxxv, pp. 75-76. Derham in his Physico-Theology quotes this passage in Latin in a footnote (p. 2). Many of these ideas have become commonplaces in the literature which we are considering. Brockes in the poem "Verweis wegen unserer Unerkenntlichkeit gegen den Schöpfer" (IX, 400) says that we enquire about the artist when we see a picture, yet few bother to ask about nature "von Gottes Finger selbst gezieret!" Yet any attempt to copy nature is just "eine schlechte Schmiererey."

on an extremely important theme for the early eighteenth century, the superiority of nature to human art. The following passage from Ray's Wisdom of God in Creation expresses the same ideas:

There is no greater, at least no more palpable and convincing Argument of the Existence of a Deity, than the admirable Art and Wisdom that discovers itself in the Make and Constitution, the Order and Disposition, the Ends and Uses of all the parts and Members of this stately Fabrick of Heaven and Earth: For if in the Works of Art (as for Example) a curious Edifice or Machine, Counsel, Design, and Direction, to an End appearing in the whole Frame, and in all the several Pieces of it, do necessarily infer the Being and Operation of some intelligent Architect, or Engineer; why shall not also, in the Works of Nature, that Grandeur and Magnificence, that Excellent Contrivance for Beauty, Order, Use, etc. which is observable in them, wherein they do as much transcend the Effects of human Art, as infinite Power and Wisdom exceeds finite, infer the Existence and Efficiency of an Omnipotent and All-wise Creator?¹

Ernst Robert Curtius² has saved us the task of searching for the background of the idea of God as maker and architect of the cosmos (*Deus artifex*) by taking us back to Plato's demiurge of the Timaeus. He traces the development of this concept referring to Cicero, African Platonism, Chalcidius, Apuleius, Irenaeus, Gnosticism, Origen until its use by Christianity when similar ideas from the Bible joined with it (God the Creator of heaven and earth and of man in his own image; the Creator as potter and tailor). Some of the points he makes are worth reporting:

Zum Verständnis der ganzen Entwicklung bleibt noch Folgendes zu beachten. Neben dem Deus artifex kennt schon die Antike das Parallelthema Natura artifex.

¹Ray, Wisdom of God, pp. 35-36.

²Ernst Robert Curtius, Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter (Bern, 1948), pp. 529-531. Jean Pépin, op.cit., pp. 34-35 supplements this.

Das artificium beider ist das gleiche: Hervorbringung der Welt und des Menschen, Baukunst, Tonbildnerei, Goldschmiedekunst, gelegentlich auch Malerei, Theaterleitung, Weberei, sind die Formen dieses artificium.
(p. 530)

We must also go back to the god of the ancient world "der bald als Weber, bald als Sticker, bald als Töpfer und bald als Schmied erscheint..."

Curtius comes to the interesting conclusion that "der Weltenbildner des Timaeus eine Sublimierung des mythischen Handwerker-gottes ist. Beide Elemente verschmelzen dann mit dem Töpfer-, Weber-, Schmiedegott des Alten Testaments in dem mittelalterlichen topos von Deus artifex" (pp. 530-531).

The work of this divine architect, or of Nature as some might call it, is superior to the works of man as the passages from Ray and Cicero tell us. This idea is found in most of the works which we have been studying.¹

¹Basil Willey, The Eighteenth Century Background (London, 1965), p. 40 writes: "Earlier orthodoxy, from Aristotle to Sidney, had represented Nature as 'inferior' to Art: ...But the eighteenth century begins to reverse this teaching." This is one of several generalizations about the swing of the pendulum between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with which I cannot agree. Cicero is not alone in believing "that the works of nature are superior to those of art." The idea is also current at the beginning of the seventeenth century, although it has not yet become the commonplace it is in the eighteenth. Arndt published his Vier Bücher vom wahren Christenthum in 1606 in which he states that no artist can paint as well as Nature (Hamburg, 1724), Bk. IV, ch. iii. Pluche, vol. I, dial. i, pp. 14-15 discussing God's wisdom in the design of insects writes: "Dans ce que l'homme fait, vous ne verrez qu'inégalités, que crévasses, que rudesse..... Au contraire les plus petits ouvrages du Créateur sont parfaits." In the poem "Die, in göttlichen Wercken, in GOTT vergnügte Seele" Brockes writes: "Ein jeder Baum, ein' jede Blume kan allem Witz der Menschen zeigen, / Wie sehr die Wercke der Natur die Kunst der Menschen übersteigen" (Ird. Verg. VII, 281, Tübingen; Hamburg ed. p. 201).

The microscope reveals to Swammerdam "with what order, measure, rule and wisdom God's creatures are all formed, and how they deprecate all the work of human art and industry, the latter not being able to bear too near an inspection."¹ Imperfect human art, he tells us, is as nothing when compared with the work of nature as represented only by the single pulmonary tube of an insect. All things, for Derham, bear witness to the "infinite Workman" for "they exceed all humane Skill so far, as that the most exquisite Copies and Imitations of the best Artists, are no other than rude bungling Pieces to them."² The passage from Shaftesbury's Characteristics which Brookes translated speaks of Nature "whose every single work affords an ampler scene, and is a nobler spectacle than all which ever art presented."³

These motifs, which we have traced back to antiquity, seem to suggest by their similarity that nothing much has changed since, yet the differences, imperceptible though they may seem to be, are found in changes of emphasis and in the inclusion of new attitudes to the world. The machine in Cicero's argument has now become clockwork. In our own times it would be the computer. Burnet's argument is a modernization of Cicero; we recognize in engines and clockwork "the Effects of Wit, Understanding and Reason," yet we are not so ready to see an intelligent principle in the works of nature, which, in any case, are

¹Jan Swammerdam, The Book of Nature or, the History of Insects, trans. Thomas Filloyd (London, 1758), p. 132.

²Derham, Physico-Theology, Bk. II, p. 38.

³Above p. 9.

superior.¹

If creation is clockwork then Plato's demiurge is a clockmaker. The motif is very common in the eighteenth century. Brockes says that "Das gantze Wesen der Natur... gleicht einer grossen Wunder-Uhr." This "Wunder=Uhr des schönen Welt=Gebäudes" reveals "nutzbare Ordnung" and "Gottes Finger."²

There are certain problems involved in the conception of the divine Watchmaker. It is anthropocentric and tends to reduce the power and glory of the Creator by bringing him down to the level of a human artisan. The second problem is God's relationship to creation, whether he is an absentee Creator who wound up the clock once only and henceforth had no further duties to perform, or whether he is, somehow or other, still present in creation. As we have noted, Brockes and his group continuously emphasize God's power, and it would be a contradiction if their God were either the artisan God or the God who has no control in his own universe. Several of these writers were aware of this contradiction and tried their best to keep God in power.

This seems to me a crucial issue which has hitherto escaped attention. Perhaps this is because it is never really directly expressed, but lurks behind the question of deism, itself vague and ambiguous.

¹Burnet, I, 410.

²This is from a poem based on Pluche's Spectacle de la Nature and called "Überzeugliche Beweisgründe eines göttlichen Wesens" (Ird. Verg. VI, 422-427 Tübingen and pp. 471 ff. Hamburg).

Richard Bentley, who is particularly concerned with atheism in his Boyle lectures, gives certain clues. The title of his first lecture, The Folly of Atheism, And (what is now called) DEISM; Even with respect to the Present Life is perhaps confusing for those who might consider him as well as Ray, Derham and Brockes to be quite close to deism.

Deists, according to Leland,¹ are enemies of religion and "spreaders of poison." They include Herbert of Cherbury, Hobbes, Toland, Shaftesbury, Collins, Woolston and Tindal. Herbert of Cherbury, he tells us, made a system out of it in which revelation was considered useless, but worship, piety, virtue, repentance, rewards, and punishments important. Ray, Derham and the others are not included in the list, although they partially fit the definition. They scarcely mention Christ in their writings,² and the type of revelation they emphasize is the revelation of God in the external world, which is accessible to all men and independent of Christian revelation. However, they do not dwell on the question of the universality of natural religion as those condemned by Leland.

Bentley's ideas on deism have to be deduced from the text as they are not clearly stated. Deists are for him just as bad as atheists except that the word "deist" sounds better.

¹John Leland, A View of the Principal Deistical Writers (London, 1808), pp. 2-3.

²Christ is not mentioned much in writings of the genre we are considering.

There are some Infidels among us that not only disbelieve the Christian Religion; but impugn the assertion of a Providence, of the Immortality of the Soul, of an Universal Judgment to come, and of any Incorporeal Essence: and yet to avoid the odious name of Atheists, would shelter and skreen themselves under a new one of Deists, which is not quite so obnoxious.

(Lecture 1, pp. 5-6)

Bentley charges deists with atheism. Why this should be so is difficult to understand at first, since deists at least believe in God. The answer appears to be that the type of God they believe in does not correspond to Bentley's idea of God. He says "that the modern disguised Deists do only call themselves so for the former reason of Epicurus, to decline the publick odium and resentment of the Magistrate; and do cover the most arrant Atheism under the mask and shadow of a Deity, by which they understand no more than some eternal inanimate Matter, some universal Nature, and Soul of the World, void of all sense and cogitation, endued with none at all, much less with Infinite Wisdom and Goodness" (Lecture 1, pp. 8-9).

Epicurus had "introduced a Deity into his Philosophy, not because he was persuaded of his Existence, (for when he had brought him upon the Stage of Nature, he made him only Muta persona, and interdicted him from bearing any Part in it,) but purely that he might not incur the offence of the Government. Wherefore he was generally suspected Verbis reliquisse Deum, re sustulisse; to have framed on purpose such a contemptible paultry Hypothesis about him, as indeed left the Name and Title of God in the World; but nothing of his Nature and Power" (Lecture 1, p. 6).

From this criticism of Epicurus and the deists it is apparent that Bentley holds that a God with no power and no part to play in the world is no God. To believe in a God of this kind is to believe in no God at all. The gods of Epicurus and Democritus have to be happy with "an eternal laziness and dozing" (p. 8) for "they [Epicurus and Democritus] bereaved that Jupiter of his Thunder and Majesty, forbidding him to look or peep abroad, so much as to enquire what News in the Infinite Space about him..." (p. 8). Bentley therefore rejects the deist God of "inanimate matter" and "incorporeal essence."

Samuel Clark, in his Boyle lectures, expresses himself more directly about this kind of deist but his ideas are similar. Deists avoid the name of Epicurean atheists by saying that the Supreme Being made the world, but they are very close to atheism because their "God does not at all concern himself in the government of the World, nor has any regard to, or care of, what is done therein."¹ Such a God is not "All-powerful, Omnipresent, and Intelligent."

It is also interesting to consider why there was opposition to Descartes. Partially it was because he rejected final causes and this was felt to be playing into the hands of the atheists but, more important in our context, because of his mechanical explanation of the world. Ray's Wisdom of God in Creation gives a passage from Descartes in the section "The Cartesian Hypothesis con-

¹A Discourse Concerning the Unchangeable Obligations of Natural Religion, and the Truth and Certainty of the Christian Revelation (London, 1706), p. 19.

sider'd and censur'd"¹ with the comment: "that God had no more to do than to create the Matter, divide it into Parts, and put it into Motion, according to some few Laws, and that would of itself produce the World, and all the Creatures therein." To confute this, Ray refers to Cudworth's argument which considers Descartes and his followers to be worse than the atomists. The objection is that the Cartesian God is made to stand by as "an idle Spectator."

The question now arises, since these writers are so opposed to any system which deprives God of divine activity, how they solved the problem themselves. The idea of clockwork and watchmaker distinguishes God from creation and seems to suggest a transcendent God like Aristotle's unmoved Mover.² The answer is suitably expressed in the lines of an obscure poetess, Katherine Philips, who is quite independent of these writers:

The World's God's watch, where nothing is so smal,
But makes a part of what composes all
Could the least Pin be lost or else displac'd,
The world would be disorder'd and defac'd.
It beats no Pulse in vain, but keeps its time,
And undiscern'd to its own height doth climb;
Strung first, and daily wound up by his hand
Who can its motions guide or understand.³

¹Wisdom of God, Part I, pp. 42 ff.

²Fritz Brüggemann, introduction to Das Weltbild der deutschen Aufklärung: Deutsche Literatur in Entwicklungsreihen, Reihe Aufklärung (Darmstadt, 1966), vol. II, p. 8. "Der Deismus...faßte Gott so auf, als ob er mit der Welt, nachdem er sie geschaffen, weiter nichts mehr zu tun habe. In dieser Welt wirken die mechanischen Gesetze, die Gott selbst beim Schöpfungsakt in sie hineingelegt hatte. Die laufen nun wie ein mechanisches Uhrwerk ab, und da ist kein Eingreifen mehr möglich, ohne daß Gott den Charakter seiner eigenen Schöpfung zerstören würde."

³Poems. By the Incomparable, Mrs. K.P. [Katharine Philips] (London, 1664), p. 210.

God is needed to wind up the clock of the universe every day. If he did not intervene then it would run down.

This is Brockes' God also, a God who sustains (erhält), without whose continuous action in the universe all would fall into chaos:¹

Was ist, was lebt und webet,
Das ist, was webt und lebet
In Gott, dem Born des Lichts.
Ja, ohne sein Erhalten
Würd alles gleich veralten,
Fiel' alles in sein vorigs Nichts.
(Morgenlied auf dem Garten, I, 175)

This idea is found in Saint Augustine's City of God:

Als substantia creatrix ist Gott ubique diffusus.
Die Welterhaltung ist eine fortgehende Schöpfung.
Zöge Gott seine schaffende Macht von der Welt zurück, so würde sie sofort in das Nichts wiederum übergehen.²

It becomes a subject for poetry:

Hé Dieu, combien de fois ceste belle machine
Par sa propre grandeur eust causé sa ruine?
Combien de fois ce Tout eust senti le trespas,
S'il n'eust eu du grand Dieu pour arcs-boutans les bras?
Dieu est l'ame, le nerf, la vie, l'efficace,
Qui anime, qui meut, qui soustient ceste masse.
Dieu est le grand ressort, qui fait de ce grand corps
Iouer diuersement tous les petis ressorts...³

This idea, like the others which we have been examining, becomes enriched by different philosophical interpretations and scientific discoveries. As Burttt puts it:

For More, the world would fly to pieces without the ethereal spirit; for Newton it would run down and become motionless if it were not for the continual recruiting of motion in these various ways by active principles lodged in the ether.⁴

¹Or else creation would become nothing again if it was created from nothing (ex nihilo). See above, p. 64.

²Friedrich Ueberweg, Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie, 12th ed. (Basel, 1951), vol. II, p. 109. The reference given by Ueberweg is De civ. Dei XII, 25.

³Du Bartas, La Sepmaine, VII, 139-146, pp. 170-171.

⁴Edwin Arthur Burttt, The Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Physical Science (London, 1925), p. 275.

Bentley makes use of many of Newton's ideas in the Boyle lectures:

Without that [gravity] the whole Universe, if we suppose an undetermin'd power of Motion infused into Matter, would have been a confused Chaos, without beauty or order, and never stable and permanent in any condition. Now it may be proved in its due place, that this Gravity, the great Basis of all Mechanism, is not it self Mechanical; but the immediate Fiat and Finger of God, and the Execution of the Divine Law...¹

The correspondence between Bentley and Newton sheds more light on these ideas and reveals the same weakness which we have already noticed in Anaxagoras.² Newton ascribes gravity to God "for the Cause of Gravity is what I do not pretend to know..." (p. 20/298).³ He seems to bring in God where his ability to find an explanation of phenomena ceases. Having reached the frontiers of reason, he writes:

I do not think explicable by meer natural Causes, but am forced to ascribe it to the Counsel and Contrivance of a voluntary Agent.
(p. 3/282)

Again:

To your second Query, I answer, that the Motions which the Planets now have could not spring from any natural Cause alone, but were impressed by an intelligent Agent.
(p. 5/284)

¹Bentley, Lecture 2, part II, pp. 5-6.

²Above p. 68.

³Four Letters from Sir Isaac Newton to Doctor Bentley... (London, 1756), facsimile reprint in Isaac Newton's Papers and Letters on Natural Philosophy and related Documents, ed. I. Bernhard Cohen (Cambridge, 1958). In references to this work I have given the pages of the facsimile followed by the page numbers from the complete book.

Similarly, in the second letter of the 17th January 1692-3:

Secondly, I do not know any Power in Nature which would cause this transverse Motion without the divine Arm.

(p. 19/297)

In the same letter:

So then Gravity may put the Planets into Motion, but without the divine Power it could never put them into such a circulating Motion as they have about the Sun; and therefore, for this, as well as for other Reasons, I am compelled to ascribe the Frame of this System to an intelligent Agent.

(p. 20/298)

Herbert Drennon has published several articles on the influence of Newtonianism on Thomson and Needler. The motif with which we are dealing at the moment is Newtonian in these writers, he claims.¹

Thomson:

But, should he [the Creator] hide his face, th'astonish'd
sun,
And all the extinguish'd stars, would loosening reel
Wide from their spheres, and Chaos come again.²

Needler:

If Thou [the Creator] wert Absent, the Material Mass
Wou'd without Motion lie in boundless Space:
The Sun, arrested in his Spiral Way,
No longer wou'd dispense alternate Day...
(From A Vernal Hymn in Praise of the Creator)³

¹Herbert Drennon, "James Thomson's Contact with Newtonianism and his Interest in Natural Philosophy," PMLA, XLIX (1934), 71-80; "Newtonianism: Its Method, Theology, and Metaphysics," Englische Studien, LXVIII (1934), 397-409; "Henry Needler and Shaftesbury," PMLA, XLVI (1931), 1095-1106.

²Summer, lines 182-4. Unless otherwise indicated, quotations from the Seasons will be from the following edition: The Seasons and the Castle of Indolence, ed. J. Logie Robertson (Oxford, 1891). This is based on the 1746 edition.

³The Works of Henry Needler (1728) (Augustan Reprint Society, Pamphlet No. 90, 1961), p. 66.

Should'st Thou withdraw thy All-Supporting Powere
these glittering Stars wou'd be extinguish'd; and
Night regain the infinite Expanse.¹

The following prose passage from Needler's Works
expresses the idea very clearly:

As Matter, being put into Motion, continues no longer
to move, than the external Force impells it, but as
soon that is taken off, returns again to Rest; so a
Creature, having once been put into Being, continues
no longer therein, than the creating Power (if I may
so call it) of God retains it; but, when that is
removed, returns to its original Non-existence.²

George Cheyne also:

The Power which produces and preserves their [the
celestial bodies'] Motions, springs from something
without themselves, and if this Power were suspended
or withdrawn, they wou'd immediately stop and their
Motions wou'd be destroy'd, and they wou'd become
a lifeless unactive heap of Matter. And this Power
is nothing else that universal Law of Gravitation,
which actuates the whole frame of all the Systems of
Bodies; which proceeds from a Principle both in-
dependent of, and distinct from Matter and all its
faculties.³

This attitude to God carries within it the seeds of
its own destruction like the other deus ex machina arguments
of its predecessors.⁴ If God is used as the explanation
for forces which cannot be explained, he is in danger of
being pushed out of his universe as knowledge advances.
The logical consequence is Laplace's answer to Napoleon's
question about God's place in his system--"Sire, je
n'ai pas besoin de cette hypothèse."⁵ It also invites

¹Quoted by Drennon, FLMA, XLVI (1931), 1101, from Needler's
Works, p. 217.

²The Works of Mr. Henry Needler, 2nd ed. (London, 1728), p. 121.

³Philosophical Principles of Natural Religion (London, 1705),
p. 43.

⁴Above, p. 69.

⁵I am aware that I am quoting this out of context as most
people do in this case.

Leibniz' criticism that Newton's conception of God was a poor one since he represents him as being too inefficient to make a perfect machine:¹

Sir Isaac Newton, and his Followers, have also a very odd Opinion concerning the Work of God. According to their Doctrine, God Almighty wants to wind up his Watch from Time to Time: Otherwise it would cease to move. He had not, it seems, sufficient Foresight to make it a perpetual Motion. Nay, the Machine of God's making, is so imperfect, according to these Gentlemen, that he is obliged to clean it now and then by an extraordinary Concourse, and even to mend it, as a Clockmaker mends his Work...²

According to Koyré, Newton did not express his ideas on God's role in the universe clearly enough:

Thus, Newton does not tell us anything about the necessity of God's continuous concourse for the preservation of its [the world's] structure; he seems even to admit that, once started, the motion of the heavenly bodies could continue forever; it is only at the beginning that God's direct intervention appears indispensable.³

This confusion surely springs from the attempt to hold on to a conception of God which is severely threatened by the changed attitude to the world. It is the same problem which we encounter when we attempt to analyse the conception of God in the group of writers we are concerned with. Koyré says:

Newton's God is not merely a "philosophical" God, the impersonal and uninterested First Cause of the Aristotelians, or the--for Newton--utterly indifferent and world-absent God of Descartes. He is--or, in any case, Newton wants him to be--the Biblical

¹The Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence, ed. H.G. Alexander (Manchester, 1965), Introduction xvi.

²Quoted by Alexandre Koyré, From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe (Baltimore, 1957), p. 236. Subsequently referred to as "Koyré."

³Ibid., p. 224.

God, the effective Master and Ruler of the world created by him.

(p. 225)

As Newton himself writes (It is again a question of not robbing Jupiter of his fire):

The Supreme God is a Being eternal, infinite, absolutely perfect; but a being, however perfect, without dominion, cannot be said to be Lord God...

The metaphor "the Book of Nature"¹ is even more widespread than the clockwork image and is also part of the same web of ideas. God spoke the word and saw that his creation was good. Man also saw that it was good and that it implied a First Cause. The laws which governed it, the harmony and the rich variety which he observed reflected the wisdom, goodness and power of a creator.

Once again, Curtius² has saved us the task of tracing the metaphor back. He gives a host of examples from medieval writers like Bonaventura, Conrad of Megenb^erg, Raymond of Sabunde, Luis of Granada, Hugh of St Victor, John of Salisbury and Nicholas of Cusa and concludes the period of the Middle Ages:

¹The following metaphors are akin to the "Book of Nature." God's traces, Gottes Spur, God's finger, Gottes Finger, God's footsteps, God's footprints, footprints of a Deity, Book of the World, Weltbuch, ABC, heavenly ABC, dieses Weltbuchs ABC, Nature's volume, spacious volume, book of wisdom, Buch der Weisheit, book of mankind, Buch der Creatur, the great book of the universe, Buch der Sternen, die himmlische Schrift. The conception of the world as the mirror or shadow of God is also related. Arndt, Bk. IV, ch. iii, p. 567: "... in Gottes Buch sinds lebendige Buchstaben, welche allen Menschen, groß und klein, Gelehrt- und Ungelehrten, vor Augen gestellt werden..." Brockes tells us in his poem "Das Buch der Natur" of the superiority of the Creator's "Natur-Buch": "... Unser ganzer Kreis der Erde/Ist darinn ein einzigs Blatt. Andre Kreise, welche man,/Nebst den Sonnen, in den Sternen, zählen, und nicht zählen, kann./Seh' ich, in erstaunter Ehrfurcht, als so viele Blätter an,/Die die Majestät der Gottheit, uns, auf eine Weis', erklären,/Als es aller Menschen Schriften, Wort' und Bücher, nimmer lehren" (VIII, 240, Tübingen; Hamburg, p. 272).

²Op.cit., pp. 324-327.

Fassen wir zusammen, so ergibt sich, daß die Vorstellung von der Welt oder der Natur als einem "Buch" in der Kanzelberedsamkeit aufgekommen ist, dann in die mystisch-philosophische Spekulation des Mittelalters übernommen wurde und endlich in den allgemeinen Sprachgebrauch übergang.

This information is naturally very welcome but it can only be a stepping-stone. The expression itself, like any expression involving the ambiguous word "nature," covers a wide field. It corresponds to the motivating idea of the literature which interests Brockes and his contemporaries most, the idea that creation reveals God. What we have already discussed in connection with this premise naturally applies to the metaphor "the Book of Nature." As works inspired by it can develop in different ways and end with little in common, the book of nature can mean different things to different people. The mystic reads a mystic message, the scientist a scientific message and so on. It is really a question of reading into the book of nature one's own philosophy.

The book of nature is the object of study. For Grew and Malpighi it is plant life, for Swammerdam and Leeuwenhoek insects. Brockes and Pluche cover the entire universe, the "spectacle de la nature." All of these writers and those who share their philosophy read in the book of nature the same message. God is the creator of heaven and earth and he is characterized by his wisdom, goodness, love and power. Aristides (384-322 B.C.) in the first extant Christian Apology¹ read the same message:

I, O king, by the grace of God came into this world;
and having contemplated the heavens and the earth

¹William Fulton, op.cit., p. 33.

and the seas, and beheld the sun and the rest of the orderly creation, I was amazed at the arrangement of the world; and I comprehended that the world and all that is therein are moved by the impulse of another, and I understood that he that moveth them is God, who is hidden in them and concealed from them: and this is well known, that that which moveth is more powerful than that which is moved.¹

St Gregory also:

If we look attentively at outward things, we are recalled by them to inward things. For the wonders of the visible creation are the footprints of our Creator. Himself as yet we cannot see, but we are on the way that leads to vision, when we admire Him in the things that He has made. And so we call the creation His footprints, since by the things that are derived from Him we are guided to Himself.²

Each blade of grass has writing:

Ein jedes Gräschen war mit Linien geziert,
Ein jedes Blatt war vollgeschrieben;
Denn jedes Aderchen, durchs Licht illuminiert,
Stellt' einen Buchstab vor...
(Das Blümlein Vergißmeinnicht, I, 77)

God's creatures show traces of his wisdom and power which Brockes asks us to admire:

Ach bewundert in der Pracht
Solcher schönen Kreaturen
Die so offenbaren Spuren
Seiner Weisheit, seiner Macht!
(Mannigfaltige Frühlingsfreude, III, 606)

Another development of the Book of Nature theme to note in passing--it has little bearing on Brockes' background--is the branch of English deism represented by Toland and Tindal which emphasizes the universality of natural religion.³ Sir Thomas Browne derives his reli-

¹"The Apology of Aristides," trans. J. Rendel Harris, Texts and Studies, contributions to Biblical and Patristic Literature, ed. J. Armitage Robinson (Cambridge, 1891), vol. I, p. 35.

²Fulton, p. 34.

³The Stoic doctrine of innate ideas and Cicero's transmission of it also play a part. Fulton, op.cit., p. 32. Also Tertullian - Johannes Quasten, Patrology (Utrecht, 1953), vol. II, pp. 264-266.

gion from two books but it is easy to see how the book of God could eventually come to be regarded as superfluous:

Thus there are two bookes from whence I collect my Divinity; besides that written one of God, another of his servant Nature, that universall and publick Manuscript, that lies expans'd unto the eyes of all; those that never saw him in the one, have discovered him in the other: This was the Scripture and Theology of the Heathens; the naturall motion of the Sun made them more admire him, than its supernaturall station did the Children of Israel; the ordinary effects of nature wrought more admiration in them, than in the other all his miracles; surely the Heathens knew better how to joyne and reade these mysticall letters, than wee Christians, who cast a more carelesse eye on these common Hieroglyphicks, and disdain to suck Divinity from the flowers of nature.

Besides revealing God's craftsmanship, the Book of Nature enables its student to elevate himself above the herd:

He who looks the higher is the more highly distinguished, and turning over the great book of nature (which is the proper object of philosophy) is the way to elevate one's gaze. And though whatever we read in that book is the creation of the Omnipotent Craftsman, and is accordingly excellently proportioned, nevertheless that part is most suitable and most worthy which makes His work and His craftsmanship most evident to our view.²

The book of Nature, as conceived of by Bruno not only elevates man but reflects the highest good:

Whatever the good be for which a man strives, let him turn his eyes to the heavens and the worlds; there is spread before him a picture, a book, a mirror, in which he may behold, read, contemplate the imprint (vestigium), the law, and the reflection of the highest good--and with his sensible ears drink in the highest harmony, and raise himself as by a ladder, according to the grades of the forms of things, to

¹Sir Thomas Browne, Religio Medici, ed. L.C. Martin (Oxford, 1964), section 16, p. 15.

²Galileo, Dialogue concerning the two chief world systems - Ptolemaic & Copernican, trans. Stillman Drake (University of California Press, 1953). Dedication to the Grand Duke of Tuscany.

the contemplation of another, the highest world.¹

Brockes, in his scientific poems, is not directly concerned with harmony and the highest good, as envisaged in this Platonic passage of Bruno's. There is, however, a corollary to the conception of goodness. It is what Professor Lovejoy has named "the principle of plenitude."

Bruno repeats some of its most typical arguments:

Why should or how can we suppose the divine potency to be idle? Why should we say that the divine goodness, which is capable of communicating itself to an infinity of things and of pouring itself forth without limit, is niggardly?

The superabundance of divine goodness overflows in creation, realizing all possibilities of existence. The result is infinite variety with no gaps between, each species graduating into the next so that a great scale extends from the lowest form of life to the highest. Bruno in this instance is thinking of an argument for an infinite number of worlds:

Why should that centre of deity which is able to expand itself (if it may be so expressed) into an infinite sphere, remain barren, as if it were envious? Why should the infinite capacity be frustrated, the possibility of the existence of infinite worlds be cheated, the perfection of the divine image be impaired - that image which ought rather to be reflected back in a mirror as immeasurable as itself?²

¹James L. MacIntyre, Giordano Bruno (London, 1903), p. 181. Brockes has the idea of a ladder leading to God but from the things in the world which we perceive with our senses: "...In Dingen, die dem Sinn sich zeigen, / Muß unser Geist, der für sie sinnlich, als wie auf Leitern, zu ihm [God] steigen" (Der bekannte und unbekannte Gott, VII, 7, Tübingen; Hamburg, p. 8). There is a more detailed discussion of the ladder to God in "Sinnen=Schule" (VI, 270).

²Lovejoy, p. 118.

It is this principle of plenitude which inspires Brockes to name all the varieties of stone, metals, fruit and vegetables. In his Drey Reiche, when he devoted several stanzas to different kinds of apples,¹ he was not thinking of God's bounty in supplying man with apples, but of the wonder of plenitude. Bruno's mirror in the above passage is allied to the book image, and it is God's perfection and goodness which is reflected in infinite variety.

In Bruno's case there are leanings towards pantheism but this cannot be said of Brockes and the other members of the group. The clockwork image suggests a separation of Creator and creation, while the book of nature implies a closer link between the two, even a degree of divine immanence. It is not surprising, if one reviews the examples of the book of nature motif quoted here and also in Curtius' book, that the writers are associated with the Platonic tradition. The external world is the reflection or shadow of the invisible world.

The motif of the book of nature is also linked with the question of epistemology. Origen writes:

Now the works of the Divine Providence and the design of the whole universe are as it were rays of God's nature, in comparison with his very being. Our mind cannot behold God as he is in himself, therefore it forms its conception of the Creator from the beauty of his works and the loveliness of his creatures.²

God may be approached by means of analogy:

This analogical evidence of God's nature and attributes is all of which we are capable at present, and we must either be contented to know him thus or sit

¹The editor of volume IX cut out this section in order to spare the reader.

²The Early Church Fathers, ed. and trans. Henry Bettenson (Oxford, 1956), p. 255.

down with an entire ignorance and neglect of God.¹

God is unknowable for Nicholas of Cusa (1401-1464).

We can approximate to truth but can never reach it:

Bedenke, daß wir in dieser Welt durch Gleichnisse und Rätselbilder wandeln, weil der Geist der Wahrheit nicht von dieser Welt und auch nur insofern von ihr gefaßt werden kann, als wir durch Gleichnisse und Symbole, die wir als solche erkennen, zum Unerkannten emporgerissen werden.²

The world is a symbol; it is "das geschaffene Bild der Darstellung, weil sie Spiegel des Schöpfers ist, wie der Apostel sagt: Wir sehen nun im Spiegel. Die Welt ist als Gleichnis Gottes geschaffen, da Gott ja ein anderes Vorbild als sich selbst nicht hatte. Genau gesprochen ist die körperliche Schöpfung Gottes Spur, die geistige Schöpfung Gottes Ebenbild."³

Brockes' God seems sometimes to be knowable and sometimes unknowable. He has no doubts about the God who is manifest in creation. There is nothing clearer and more obvious than his existence and his attributes of wisdom, love, goodness and power. Only the blind and indifferent can fail to read this in the book of nature:

Von einer recht= und wahren Gottheit die allerhellst'
und klaresten Spuren
Zeigt unsern überführten Seelen das Reich lebend'ger
Kreaturen.
(IX, 195)

¹Philip C. Ritterbusch, Overtures to Biology: the Speculations of Eighteenth-century Naturalists (Yale University Press, 1964), p. 65. The quotation is from William King's Divine Predestination and Foreknowledge (1709), p. 14.

²Karl Jaspers, Nikolaus Cusanus (München, 1964), p. 47.

³Nikolaus Cusanus, Predigten 1430-1441, ed. Ernst Hoffmann (Heidelberg, 1952), p. 83.

There is some ambiguity in the following example:

Laß unsre Seelen dich Dein unbegreiflichs Wesen,
Im Buch der Creatur, erstaunt, mit Ehrfurcht lesen!

The poem does not reveal whether God will still be incomprehensible after we have read the book. The lines are from the poem "Die himmlische Schrift" (Metzler, pp. 115-123) in which we are told:

Indessen müssen wir,
Zu unsers Schöpfers Ruhm, so lange wir noch hier,
Das Wunder-ABC der Sternen
In Ehrfurcht buchstabiren lernen.

The script might seem confusing at first like Arabic, Russian and Chinese. The poem concludes with the message which Brockes has read in the "Buch der Sternen":

So deucht mich, daß ich hie und da
Und überall geschrieben sah
Den grossen Namen JEHOVAH.

Brockes, in this poem, makes a great deal of fuss about the cryptic language which has to be learnt before one can read the message "Jehovah." He usually writes poem after poem explaining that the letters in the Book of Nature are plain and easily read by those who are willing to open their eyes. The message is everywhere:

Das wundervolle Buch der lehrenden Natur
Zeigt uns ein liebend= weis= allmächtiges Wunderwesen,
Und giebt es unserm Geist auf jedem Blatt zu lesen.
Von seinem Daseyn zeigt sich überall die Spur...
(IX, 423)

The reason for this wavering may be found in Brockes' conception of God as both a known and unknown God who reveals himself and conceals himself. In the poem "Der bekannte und unbekannte Gott" Brockes writes:

Ich will ein neues Loblied singen
Von dem, Der, in dem Schmuck der Welt und aller Creaturen
Pracht,

Von Seinem eigentlichen Seyn, von Seiner Weisheit,
Lieb und Macht
Ein unverborgnes, ein sichtbar und unsichtbar Bild,
Worinn sein unbegreiflichs Wesen, zu unserm Besten,
sich verhüllt,
Und doch bekannt macht, uns sich weist.
(VII, 7, Tübingen; Hamburg p. 8)

Brockes' understanding is limited. The book of nature, when it is confined to his everyday world, his garden and his immediate surroundings, presents no difficulty. The book of the stars takes him a little out of his depth. When he ventures into the realms of philosophy, as he does in another group of poems, he encounters the mists of mystery.

Pluche is very close to Brockes in his outlook. The natural world is a "livre exposé à tous les yeux, & cependant assez peu lû" (vol. I, preface). If we start at the foot of the scale of knowledge we can learn something, "mais vouloir pénétrer le fond même de la Nature, vouloir rappeler les effets à leurs causes spéciales, & comprendre l'artifice ou le jeu des ressorts, & les plus petits élémens dont ces ressorts sont composés, c'est une entreprise hardie." The question of the limitations of knowledge is discussed in the "Lettre de Monsieur le Prieur de Jonval, à Monsieur le Chevalier du Breuil, touchant l'étendue & les bornes de la raison" (vol. I, p. 499). Pluche tells us that there are many differences of opinion about the accessibility of knowledge. The depths of the mechanism of nature and the being of the Almighty are mysteries; it is better to be virtuous on earth than to probe too much and reach for the skies. Brockes tells us also that it is

vain to be dogmatic about "Der Gottheit unerforschlich Wesen" since "Um zu wissen, wer er ist, müssen wir, er selber, seyn" (Das vergebliche Grübeln, IX, 435).

Some of this mistrust of aspiring too high might be a residue of the earlier period. We think of Marlowe's Faust who was damned for seeking knowledge beyond man's bounds. Raphael's words in Milton's Paradise Lost also advocate restraint in the aspiration after knowledge:

To ask or search I blame thee not, for Heav'n
Is as the Book of God before thee set,
Wherein to read his wondrous Works, and learne
His Seasons, Hours, or Days, or Months, or yeares:
This to attain, whether Heav'n move or Earth,
Imports not, if thou reck'n right; the rest
From Man or Angel the great Architect
Did wisely to conceal, and not divulge
His secrets to be scanned by them who ought
Rather admire...

(P.L. VIII, 66 ff.)

Different views about knowledge are found in the group of scientists and divines who have interested us in this study. Nehemiah Grew believes that the observation and study of nature "naturally lead us to God."¹ Yet Leeuwenhoek, who also worked with a microscope, is always conscious of man's inability to reach truth:

In a word, the farther we endeavour to dive into the hidden works of Nature, the more we ought to be convinced, that we never can arrive at her farthest recesses, though many persons, when making use of a good microscope, weakly suppose, that nothing is out of the reach of their observation.²

Elsewhere he tells us that the things we discover by means of the microscope are "but as the shadow of those which

¹Nehemiah Grew, The Anatomy of Plants, 2nd ed. (London, 1682), Part II, 72.

²The Select Works of Antony van Leeuwenhoek, trans. Samuel Hoole (London, 1800-1807), vol. I, p. 298 and vol. II, p. 192.

hitherto remain concealed from us..." (p. 314). Our knowledge of God is also limited:

...the more we reflect on the consummate wisdom and skill of the Creator of the Universe, the less are we able to form adequate ideas of his Perfections.

Jan Swammerdam's attitude is similar:

The deeper we here look into nature, the more we are obliged to confess our blindness, and our ignorance. Indeed, there is nothing more true, than that all these things, which I advance and publish, are no more than the naked shadows of the inexplicable mysteries of the Great Creator: the internal nature, and true disposition, of these meanders are above the reach of our limited understandings.¹

Robert Boyle is more optimistic:

The Book of Nature, is a fine and large piece of tapestry rolled up, which we are not able to see all at once, but must be content to wait for the discovery of its beauty, and symmetry, little by little, as it gradually comes to be more and more unfolded, or displayed.²

The image here is different but the idea behind it is similar to that of the "chain of knowledge" which students of James Thomson have noted in the Seasons. McKillop quotes from the invocation to Philosophy in Summer where "reason is described as 'up-tracing, from the vast Inane,/The Chain of Causes, and Effects to Him,/Who, absolutely, in HIMSELF, alone,/Possesses Being.'" Professor McKillop interprets this as "the chain of cause and effect, evidently identified or confused, as often, both with the Baconian pyramid and the Platonic chain of being."³

¹Op.cit., part II, p. 8.

²Op.cit., p. 736.

³Alan Dugald McKillop, The Background of Thomson's Seasons (Minneapolis, 1942), p. 21. Referred to as "McKillop" in future chapters.

The passage already quoted¹ from Bruno is an example of this Platonic chain. McKillop and Lovejoy² both give an example from Milton's Paradise Lost which deals with knowledge and

the scale of Nature set
From centre to circumference, whereon
In contemplation of created things
By steps we may ascend to God.

But, concerning Thomson, McKillop concludes:

Thus Thomson's conception of advancing knowledge comes from modern science; his notion of new levels of knowledge in other states of being is based on the idea of the chain and correlates a universe of infinite gradations with a process of discovery.
(p. 25)

Herbert Drennon tells us that Thomson's conception of advancing knowledge is Newtonian: "Newton held that in tracing the chain of causes and effects, man's mind is ultimately led to a belief in God (First Cause)."³ Whether he is justified in confining the idea to Newton is doubtful. The idea of a scale of knowledge may not be formulated in this way, but it seems to be implied in the complex of ideas which we have been following. It is easy for it to develop from the earlier ideas of causality and teleology. Plato's Phaedo postulates a form of "Jacob's ladder of science."⁴

Brockes was familiar with this idea since he translated Genest's Principes de Philosophie which contains this passage:

¹Above pp. 90-91.

²Lovejoy, p. 89. McKillop, p. 19.

³Est, LXVIII, 403.

⁴W. Fulton, op.cit., p. 222.

Fais, que je puisse aller
Des connaissances naturelles,
A ces veritez éternelles,
Qu'il T'a plu de nous révéler.¹

At the same time this is a prayer for knowledge which also recurs as a poetic motif. Brockes in the Drey Reiche and in the final stanza of the poem "Das Feuer" also prays for knowledge:

Herr! erleuchte mein Gemüthe,
Zünd' in mir Dein Feuer an,
Daß ich Deine Macht und Güte
Sehn, verstehn und preisen kann!
(Metzler, p. 530)

There is a prayer for knowledge in Virgil's Georgics which James Thomson adapts in the Seasons:

For myself, may the lovely Muses first above all else, they whose mysteries I bear, smitten with o'erwhelming Passion, take me to themselves, and show me the paths of heaven, and its stars, the various eclipses of the sun and labours of the moon, from whence the earthquake springs, by what force it is that deep seas learn to swell and burst their barriers, and again of themselves sink back into their place...²

Thomson:

Oh, Nature! all-sufficient! over all!
Enrich me with the knowledge of thy works!
Snatch me to heaven,--thy rolling wonders there,
World beyond world, in infinite extent,
Profusely scatter'd o'er the blue immense,
Shew me; their motions, periods, and their laws,
Give me to scan. Through the disclosing deep
Light my blind way...³

¹L'abbé Charles-Claude Genest, Principes de philosophie, ou Preuves Naturelles de l'existence de Dieu et de l'immortalité de l'Ame (Paris, 1716). The above passage is from Ird. Verg. III, 44. Brockes' German translation is on the other side of the page.

²Bk. II, 475 ff. I have only quoted what is required to illustrate my point.

³Autumn, lines 1352 ff.

"Snatch me to heaven" in the Thomson passage suggests another widespread motif. If man is unable to reach the knowledge which he desires in this world, there is a belief that all will be revealed to him in the next, even on his way to the next. This is a very common literary theme. The observer travels through the cosmos in a dream or in his imagination.¹ Sometimes he is guided by a spirit or an angel, or else he travels as a departed spirit. Either he ecstatically observes the marvels of the cosmos or mysteries are revealed to him which had always puzzled him in his earthly life.

Brookes imagines the cosmic flight of a departed spirit:

Wenn ein Geist die ird'schen Glieder
Einst verliesse, schnell entwich',
Und, auf feurigem Gefieder,
Durch des Himmels Abgrund strich',
Dort die herrlichen Figuren
Der gestirnten Creaturen,
Und auf einmahl, in der Näh',
Millionen Sonnen sah'...²

The final stanza completes this hypothetical idea by telling us how ecstatic he would be.

The same idea is found in Derham's Astro-Theology:
"With what Pleasure then shall departed happy souls survey
the most distant Regions of the Universe, and view all
those glorious Globes thereof, and their noble Appendages
with a nearer view."³ John Norris of Bemerton (1657-1711),

¹Marjorie Nicolson has discussed the origin and development of the cosmic voyage in Voyages to the Moon (New York, 1948). Readers of Dante are already familiar with the motif. The question of enlarged knowledge is given the name "empirical immortality" by McKillop (p. 22).

²"Die Sonne" stanza 71, Metzler, p. 204.

³3rd ed. 1719, p. 246.

the Platonist, in "The Elevation" is even more ecstatic. He reaches heaven, his former home, which is "one immense and overflowing Light" and exclaims "Stop here my Soul; thou canst not bear more Bliss/Nor can thy now rais'd palate ever relish less."¹

The joy of this cosmic experience is generally accompanied by "enlarged Contemplation of the Divine Wisdom in the Government of the World, and a Discovery of the secret and amazing steps of Providence, from the Beginning to the End of Time."² Robert Boyle considers it "likely, that as all our faculties will, in the future blessed state, be enlarged and heightened; so will our knowledge also be, of all things that will continue worth it, and can contribute to our happiness in that new state."³ The contemplation of eternal truth will constitute the entertainment of the blessed according to Needler,⁴ who derived his ideas from Addison. Such ideas are not new, but merely a rationalistic modification of the old idea of the Beatific Vision.

¹John Norris, A Collection of Miscellanies: consisting of Poems, Essays, Discours and Letters, occasionally written (Oxford, 1687), p. 53, stanza vi.

²Ray, Wisdom of God, p. 199.

³Op.cit., p. 732.

⁴Henry Needler, "On the continual Improvement of the Understandings of Beatified Spirits. (Occasion'd by reading the Spectator, No 111)", The Works of Mr. Henry Needler (1728). (Augustan Reprint Society. No 90, 1961), p. 93.

CHAPTER IV
THE LITERARY BACKGROUND

The important part played by science in the development of the poetry of the period which we have been considering has been overlooked. Histories of literature do not mention it. This is largely due to the idea which has long persisted that science is the antithesis of poetry. Recent research in English literature is providing a more complete picture. German literature still requires this type of investigation. This study has, I hope, already indicated that the role played by Brockes in these developments entitles him to a larger place in the history of German literature and in the history of ideas than has hitherto been accorded him.

We have already referred to the widespread interest in science. Much of the literature of the period absorbed a considerable amount of scientific material which, in the course of time, became dissociated from its context. Consequently, later generations, especially our own, miss some of the implications and do not notice the scientific associations. Literature can be misunderstood and misinterpreted as a result. In case this sounds abstract, the study by Kester Svendsen on Milton and Science is a good example of the way in which the understanding of a work is enriched when the original scientific associations are restored. The concluding sentence of his book explains the method:

Retracing the subsurface movement of science and exploring the many modes of its entrance into the whole poem, as we have done here, re-establish the connections and illuminate the literary function of those precepts of beneficence Milton fetched from the tremendous cabinet of nature and unified into the wide deep vision which is Paradise Lost.¹

Brockes' scientific poems were new to German literature. This would not be significant in itself, but some of the themes and expressions which developed from them are found in subsequent German poetry. Whether such influences are to be directly attributed to Brockes or whether they were simply "in the air," as is often the case in matters of influence, is not within the scope of the present study. It is the reconstruction of the background of these poems and of the tradition to which they belong which is important. The theological and scientific elements have already been analysed; we must now turn to the poetic and literary tradition.

Why Brockes chose to versify science instead of confining himself to prose as did many of the other writers with the same aims is worth asking. He does not tell us directly. Others before him also versified science and it is possible in some cases to discover their motives. An inferior English poet called John Reynolds gives a list of aims in the preface to his versified Death's Vision (1709). Among these is the desire to popularize scientific discoveries, Newtonian in particular, in order to help the readers to remember such facts. Next, he criticizes

¹Milton and Science (Cambridge, Mass., 1956), p. 248.

contemporary poetry and stresses the need for elevating it (p. 1). The work of scientists like Newton, Whiston and Keil points to "divine wisdom and perfection" therefore, he asks, "will not that science by infallible steps lead us up to religion and to the great author of it?" (p. 2) We should note here that John Dennis had already spoken of the importance of religion and science for sublimity in poetry:

The next Ideas that are most proper to produce the Enthusiasm of Admiration, are the great Phaenomena of the Material World; because they too lead the Soul to its Maker, and shew, as the Apostle says, his eternal Power and Godhead...

Reynolds wishes to combine science and religion in poetic form since poetry preserves the ideas better. He is indebted for this thought to Samuel Parker who had remarked that the Epicurean philosophy would not have lasted so long if it had not been preserved by the poetry of Lucretius (p. 7). Reynolds feels that his own philosophy is superior to that of Lucretius and more worthy of preservation. Blackmore in the preface to his Creation also said that Epicureanism would not have lived so long "had it not been kept alive and propagated by the famous poem of Lucretius."²

It is noteworthy that these writers are always concerned about precedents and authorities to protect

¹"The grounds of Criticism in Poetry," in The Critical Works of John Dennis, ed. Edward Niles Hooker (Baltimore, 1939), p. 348. The biblical reference is to Rom. i. 20 which has been frequently quoted.

²Richard Blackmore, Creation in The Works of the English Poets, from Chaucer to Cowper, ed. Samuel Johnson (London, 1810), vol. X, p. 331 (preface).

them from criticism. Nowadays a writer hankers after originality. Reynolds names others, besides Lucretius, who consider the contemplation of nature to be an elevating and pleasing occupation. We note the same combination of ideas which we have already discussed in connection with Brockes and the other writers. The celebration of creation must have been the primitive object of poetry (p. 5) for "What else must be the Subject of Angelical Celebrations and Songs, upon laying the Foundations of the World, but the Vastness, the Harmonious Laws and Beauty of the Creation?" Cowley, he says, "Represents the Sacred Students in the Schools of the Prophets Employ'd both in Investigating the Mysteries of Nature, and Celebrating them in their Daily Songs of Devotion" (p. 5). There is also "the Great Heroic Poet of Mantua, who provides the like Treat of Natural Philosophy for his Aeneas at the Court of Carthage" (p. 6).

A study of the neglected question of science and poetry, besides facilitating a more accurate literary interpretation, should throw light on poetic language. Eric Blackall in his book The Emergence of German as a Literary Language 1700-1775 (Cambridge, 1959) emphasizes the importance of the early eighteenth century for the growth of the German language. Brockes is only mentioned in connection with his contribution to the change of climate; a poem on spring of 1673 is compared to one on the same subject by Brockes of 1737. Blackall does not mention Brockes' linguistic contributions. Brockes, as

has already been shown, was importing new ideas from France, Britain and Holland and would have to create new expressions for many of them. This is particularly true of his translating activity. Thomson's Seasons, for example, is a work of great linguistic richness beyond Brockes' own ability and the translation would certainly oblige him to be inventive and to forge many new German equivalents.

The English example would be a good starting-point for such an investigation, as there are a number of minor works in which the linguistic development can be observed. Besides, some work has already been done on the question of poetic diction and its association with science. Chapters III, IV and V of John Arthos, Description in Eighteenth Century Poetry (Ann Arbor, 1949) are particularly relevant. Their titles are "The formation of a scientific language for natural description," "Stability and change in the language of natural philosophy," and "The interchange of scientific language and poetic diction." They show how developing science tended to use Greek and Latin vocabulary rather than the vernacular which was not felt to be precise enough. Although the classical vocabulary came down from classical times unchanged, the actual meaning kept up with current scientific ideas. A wealth of illustrations supports his points.¹ This vocabulary was shared

¹For instance, Arthos takes the word "ambient," a stock expression of neoclassic poetry, and refers to many examples of its use in a scientific context (op.cit., p. 30).

by poetry and eventually became identified with "poetic diction." Arthos' book shows that any study of eighteenth-century poetry must include the question of the scientific background.

Death's Vision can usefully supplement Arthos' work as we can see how Reynolds attempts to combine science and poetry. He supplies footnotes giving the source of his ideas and images. Some of these ideas, such as "uncompounded self" and "this indivisible extended point," could never become the language of lyrical poetry, whereas others are not quite so obviously scientific:

Ah me! what Diff'rent Balls take yonder Flight,
Vast Fiery Balls, Clad o're with thickned Night!
How regular; how swift, how far they run,
From us, thro' all the Orbs, Around the setting Sun.
(p. 26)

Yet the footnote reads: "See an Orbit of the Comets in the Solar System set at the beginning of Mr. Whiston's Theory. And his Lemma, 46th." (p. 32, Note 26). When he calls the comets "erratic dungeons," "sul^hpureous rooms of hell" inhabited by "wretched wights," "prisoners of despair" (p. 32), he is thinking of Dr. Cheyne (Philosophical Principles, chapter III; see Reynolds' Footnote 27) who suggests that comets "may be the habitation of delinquents in a state of punishment."

In his preface, Reynolds discusses the problem of adapting "rugged" scientific terms, a problem which Lucretius also had to face when adapting Greek science to Latin verse.¹ "It is inactive, heavy and dull; refuses,

¹Titius Lucretius Carus, On the Nature of Things, trans. H.A.J. Munro (Chicago, 1952), Bk. I, 136 ff. "Nor does my mind fail to perceive how hard it is to make clear in Latin verses the dark discoveries of the Greeks, especially as many points must be dealt with in new terms on account of the poverty of the language and the novelty of the questions."

ordinarily, that metaphorical cloathing, those turns of fancy and wit, that almost essentiate a poem, and accomodate it to sprightly minds" (Preface p. 4). Blackmore, on the other hand, renounces poetic decorations and hopes that "no judicious reader will expect, in the philosophical and argumentative parts of this poem, the ornaments of poetical eloquence."¹

It might seem something of a contradiction in what I am attempting to demonstrate about the fusion of science and poetry if I say that Blackmore's place in this development is more significant than Reynolds'. His work is more coldly scientific and philosophical, and there are fewer poetic images. Another apparent contradiction is the picture given in Basil Willey's The Seventeenth Century Background (London, 1962) of the hostility of the Royal Society to poetry. An article by Richard F. Jones on "Science and English Prose Style in the Third Quarter of the Seventeenth Century"² also implies that science is contrary to the spirit of poetry.

Willey gives examples from Glanvill, Sprat and Henry Reynolds. His discussion of Sprat's History of the Royal Society enables us to see what he is emphasizing:

It is noticeable that in the forefront of this account he places the intention of the Society to purge the present age of the errors of anti-quity--'And to accomplish this, they have endeavour'd, to separate the knowledge of Nature from the colours of Rhetorick, the devices of Fancy, or the delightful deceit of Fables.'-- in a word, they have determined to declare war upon poetry.

(p. 210, Willey's italics)

¹Op.cit., p. 332.

²PMLA, XLV (Dec. 1930), 977-1009.

This passage and the others quoted by Willey do not denounce poetry in itself but the seventeenth century idea of poetry with its unrealities, "Tropes and Figures," "fairies and superstitions." John Reynolds' "metaphorical cloathing" and turns of "fancy and wit" belong to that conception of poetry which is under attack. We can also add classical mythology which many felt was essential to poetry.¹

Reynolds is a transition figure, looking to the future in his desire to change the subject matter of poetry and elevate it by means of science, but looking to the past because of his belief that poetry must be clothed in metaphor and "turns of fancy and wit." There are several pages describing what happens to the body at death "when life's weak Lamp is extinct." They are a muddle of pseudo-scientific and pseudo-poetic terms which can neither be called poetry nor science. The "Primigenial Fire/That Bade the Pulse Keep Time and Beat," the "bellows" "working day and night/To fan, and to foment the wasting light," "the purple, vital flood,/That drives the Wheels and Keeps the Bellows going" all cease to function. Thoughts and messages to the brain become soldiers, guards and spies. Death is the time

When all the ministers of sense
The posts of quick intelligence,
Shall march no more from Home
Shall neither tell the affairs abroad,

¹Blackmore, op.cit., introduction p. 332: "If a divine should begin his sermon with a solemn prayer to Bacchus, or Apollo, to Mars, or Venus, what would the people think of their preacher?"

Nor their Domestic News bring in,
Being slain upon the road,
Dispatch no more advices to the mind within.

James Thomson, whose Seasons contains a considerable amount of scientific material, has not always succeeded in blending it with poetry either. McKillop draws attention to "some rather indigestible bits of botany:

'By Thee the various vegetative Tribes,
Wrapt in a filmy Net, and clad with Leaves,
Draw the live Aether, and imbibe the Dew.
By Thee dispos'd into congenial Soils
Stands each attractive Plant, and sucks, and swells
The juicy Tide, a twining Mass of Tubes.
At Thy Command, the vernal Sun awakes
The torpid Sap, detruded to the Root
By Wintry Winds, that now, in fluent Dance
And lively Fermentation, mounting, spreads
All this innumerable-colour'd Scene of things.'"¹

Apart from the more technical botany of the Drey Reiche der Natur which is quite unpoetic, botanical vocabulary and references are found in several of Brockes' poems combined with enthusiasm and wonder. Although such poems are not what one would call fine poetry, they can be considered a step in the right direction. Brockes is describing a personal experience, his admiration of a flower or vegetable and, secondly, he is describing what he has actually observed instead of what Virgil or some other poet has written about. This is true of a seemingly banal subject "Der Kürbis." Walking in his garden one day, Brockes sees a pumpkin in a vulnerable position on the path. As he tries to move it, it breaks off in his hands. "Ey daß dich! fieng ich an,/Ist das nicht Schad'? Ey hätt' ich es gelassen!" He soon consoles himself with the thought "Es soll, geliebte Rancke, mich/Die kleine

¹ McKillop, p. 55. The quotation is from Spring (1728), p. 28, lines 513-23.

Frucht und Bluhmen, die dich zieren,/Zu dein= und meinem Schöpfer führen." He then describes the whole plant in considerable detail. It is science which has taught Brockes to observe and love each detail of plant life, and religion which inspires him to talk to a pumpkin as to one of God's creatures. This is no longer a scientific report but a poem. The same is true of his poem "Aurikeln im Herbst." He talks to one of the flowers:

Es kommt dein wiederhohlter Flor
Mir gleichsam vor,
Als wenn, vor andern Bluhmen allen,
Ein starcker Trieb in deinen Röhren,
Den Schöpfer der Natur zu ehren,
Geliebte Bluhme, müsse wallen.¹

Although this language does not appear to be botanical, Brockes is certainly thinking of the circulation of the sap when he uses the words "Trieb" and "Röhren."² It is also characterized by the scientific associations of the following stanza from "Die Erde":

Wer begreift der Erden Kräfte,
Wer kann doch die Art verstehn,
Wie dergleichen Wunder=Säfte,
Durch so kleine Röhrchen gehn,
Durch so dünne Stengel steigen,
Solche schöne Farben zeugen,
Drob das Hertz recht wird entzückt,
Wenn man ihren Schmuck erblickt?
(Stanza 55)

The element of wonder and amazement is associated with the scientific material.

The poet who is interested in science learns to observe. His sensuous experience of the world is enlarged and consequently his vocabulary and imagery are enriched.

¹Metzler, "Der Kürbis" p. 329; "Aurikeln im Herbst" p. 367.

²See the section on Brockes and Grew in Chapter II.

Newton's studies on light and the spectrum made a great impact on the poetic imagination as Marjorie Hope Nicolson has shown in her Newton Demands the Muse (Princeton, 1946), p. 28. A passage from Thomson's Seasons illustrates an awareness of colour which the poet owes to Newton:

The unfruitful rock itself, impregn'd by thee,
In dark retirement forms the lucid stone.
The lively diamond drinks thy purest rays,
Collected light compact! that, polished bright,
And all its native lustre let abroad,
Dares, as it sparkles on the fair one's breast,
With vain ambition emulate her eyes.
At thee the ruby lights its deepening glow,
And with a waving radiance inward flames.
From thee the sapphire, solid ether, takes
Its hue cerulean; and, of evening tinct,
The purple-streaming amethyst is thine.
With thy own smile the yellow topaz burns;
Nor deeper verdure dyes the robe of Spring
When first she gives it to the southern gale
Than the green emerald shows. But, all combined,
Thick through the whitening opal play thy beams;
Or, flying several from its surface, form
A trembling variance of revolving hues
As the site varies in the gazer's hand.
(Summer, lines 140-159)

Professor Nicolson's observations on the influence of Newton may be applied to Brockes, whose poetry is extremely rich in colour and in the interplay of light and shade. He mentions Newton several times in his work. One poem, the "Aloe Margaritifera," describes dewdrops in the sunshine and mentions "Alle Farben, die die Sonne, nach der Lehre Newtons heget..." (VIII, 238).¹

¹Brockes discusses the prism in "Das Feuer" stanza 25: "Wie das Licht im Wiederprallen/Farben zeuge, wird erkannt,/ Wenn ein Drey=Eck von Krystallen,/(Welches Prisma wird genannt)/Von der Sonnen Strahl erhellet,/Uns vor Augen Farben stellet,/Deren bunter Wunder=Schein/Nimmer kann im Glase seyn." Brockes is certainly thinking of this when he calls the sun "Farben-Vater" who "bildet/Farben, Morgenröth' und Thau/Malt, bepurpert und verguldet/Das gemischte Silber-Grau..." (Metzler, p. 182).

We have already noted the influence of microscopic studies on Brockes' poetry; astronomy and the telescope also played an important part. Doubtlessly the way in which science pointed to the human body as God's masterpiece helped to make it an object of admiration instead of disgust. In addition, the empiricism of Bacon and Locke would contribute to Brockes' gospel of the senses as the key to knowledge of the external world. For him it is man's duty to God to enjoy, through his senses, the beautiful world which God has created.

One of the earliest forms of writing which combines science and theology is the commentary on Genesis, the hexaemeron.¹ Philo's De opificio mundi and Origen's De Principiis discussed cosmological questions in the manner of Plato's Timaeus and united the knowledge of the ancient world and the biblical story of creation. After a lull, the hexaemeron flourished again in the fourth century with that of Basil the Great as the chief model. Writers in the fifth century used the material in their epics. There was a further period of oblivion until its revival by the humanists. The technique of printing enabled several hexaemera to be published.

St Basil's Hexaëmeron² consists of nine sermons which take the story of creation in Genesis verse by verse and

¹ Kurt Reichenberger, the editor of the edition of La Sepmaine which I am using gives a very useful summary of the development of this genre in Themen und Quellen der Sepmaine, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie, 108. Heft (Tübingen, 1963), pp. 9-11.

² A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, ed. Henry Wace and Philip Schaff, second series (Oxford, 1895), vol. VIII, pp. 51-107.

comment on them. St Basil introduces the scientific knowledge of his day, attacks earlier authorities and adds moral lessons. Much of this reminds us of the apologetic works of Ray and Derham. The world was created out of nothing (ex nihilo) by God's word and is sustained by God. Its design (p. 71 column 2) and order (p. 57 c. 2) exclude the possibility that it was the product of chance. Its workmanship reveals the "finger of the supreme artisan" (p. 56) and his wisdom and power. Admiration of creation leads to God: "I want creation to penetrate you with so much admiration that everywhere, wherever you may be, the least plant may bring to you the clear remembrance of the Creator" (p. 76 c. 2).

The scientific interpolations reveal a rather cautious attitude to knowledge. St Basil accepts what is straightforward and in harmony with revelation but he attacks views which seem to deprive God of his power, such as Aristotle's contention that the world is co-eternal with God. In more complicated matters such as the motion of the heavens, about which there are so many conflicting opinions, Basil advises: "Do not let us undertake to follow them for fear of Falling into like frivolities" (p. 58 c. 2). He is quick to recognize the limitations of knowledge and gives the warning: "...let us prefer the simplicity of faith to the demonstrations of reason" (p. 57 c. 2).

Because, although we ignore the nature of created things, the objects which on all sides attract our notice are so marvellous, that the most penetrating mind cannot attain to the knowledge of the least of the phenomena of the world, either to give a suitable explanation of it or to render due praise to the Creator...

Discussing views on the composition of the firmament, St Basil writes:

I, nevertheless, dare not affirm that the firmament was formed of one of these substances, or of a mixture of them, for I am taught by Scripture not to allow my imagination to wander too far afield.

He condemns those "masters of omniscience" (p. 69 c. 2) who waste time in words, who measure stars and have discovered all but one thing, "that God is the Creator of the universe." Genesis clearly tells us what we need to know. St Basil is opposed to ideas which soar beyond it, such as one which considers the waters which are under heaven to be wicked spirits: "Let us reject these theories as dreams and old women's tales. Let us understand that by water water is meant."¹

The creation story provides the framework for the science which St Basil introduces. Compared to our eighteenth-century writers, who had the benefit of the Royal Society investigations, it can scarcely be called science. Even at this level the subjects are the same--climatic conditions, circulation of the waters, plants² and animals. The world was made for man:

He, who provided pasture for horses and cattle, thought before all of your riches and pleasures.

¹The editors' introduction to the Hexaëmeron (p. 51) says that earlier treatments of the subject were too allegorical. Eugène Fialon, Etude historique et littéraire sur Saint Basile (Paris, 1865), p. 296: "Nous ne pouvons savoir ce que fut l'Hexaméron de saint Hippolyte et nous ne savons guère qu'une chose de celui d'Origène: c'est qu'il dénaturait complètement le récit mosaïque et n'y voyait que des allégories."

²The following idea is typical of the later writers: "A single plant, a blade of grass is sufficient to occupy all your intelligence in the contemplation of the skill which produced it" (p. 77 c. 2).

If he fed your cattle, it was to provide for all the needs of your life. And what object was there in the bringing forth of grain, if not for your subsistence?

(p. 76 c. 2)

St Basil is also impressed by the variety of plant and animal life. He starts to list the categories of sea creatures but gives up, as it is a task like counting "the waves of the ocean" or measuring "its waters in the hollow of the hand" (p. 90 c. 1). "What infinite variety in the different kinds!" St Basil exclaims:

All have their own names, different food, different form, shape, and quality of flesh. All present infinite variety, and are divided into innumerable classes. Is there a tunny fisher who can enumerate to us the different varieties of that fish?

(p. 91 c. 1)

Again:

There are also innumerable kinds of birds. If we review them all, as we have partly done the fish, we shall find that under one name, the creatures which fly differ infinitely in size, form and colour; that in their life, their actions and their manners, they present a variety equally beyond the power of description.

(p. 96 c. 2)

This type of enthusiasm reminds one of Brockes, who goes beyond Basil and attempts to enumerate the plants and animals. Unlike Brockes, St Basil points to the moral lesson. The plant warns us of the brevity and vanity of life (p. 76 c. 2). Most animals are without reason but endowed with admirable instinct and should be emulated by man. A few, however, are not to be imitated. The cunning crab¹ is "the image of him who craftily approaches his brother, takes advantage of his neighbour's misfortunes, and finds delight in other men's troubles." The trickery

¹This is in the Gesner-Pliny tradition.

of the squid which changes colour to catch its prey is like flatterers and those who hide under the mask of friendship (p. 91 c. 2).

St Basil's Hexaëmeron stops at the creation of man so that the most common theme of the human body as God's masterpiece is missing. St Ambrose, whose Hexaëmeron is an imitation of that of Basil, develops this theme. The connection between this type of writing¹ and the works which we have been studying is obvious. The story of creation and the theology involved in it, as well as the expansion of the original framework by means of scientific knowledge, correspond. It is only the Hexaemeron-Genesis framework which is absent in the more modern writings. Brockes deals with the same subjects, as we have already noted, but in single poems without the biblical framework. Other works of a literary nature owe much to this tradition and we will consider them briefly as they combine in a literary context the main motifs which we are interested in.

The next link to consider in the literary chain from Genesis to Brockes and his contemporaries is the French poet Du Bartas (1544-1590) whose literary influence in Europe must have been considerable. L. Delaruelle² claims that the Hexaemera of St Basil and St Ambrose are the main sources of Du Bartas' first Semaine. Pierre Viret's

¹The following books should be quite informative but I have been unable to consult them: Frank E. Robbins, The Hexaemeral Literature (Chicago, 1912); M. Thibaut de Maisières, Les poèmes inspirés du début de la Genèse à l'époque de la Renaissance (Louvain, 1931).

²"Recherches sur les sources de Du Bartas dans la 'Première Semaine'", Revue d'Histoire Littéraire, XL (1933), 321-354.

Instruction Chrestienne¹ also deals with these subjects.² Delaruelle is also aware that Du Bartas owed much to scientific works³ and the encyclopedic tradition; he mentions Conrad Gesner and Pliny.

The creation epic is discussed by R.A. Sayce in The French Biblical Epic in the Seventeenth Century (Oxford, 1955) which gives the reader a general picture of this genre. Du Bartas seems to be the most influential. He produced two "Semaines," the first dating from 1578 and the second from 1584-1603 and it is the first which deals with the six days of creation. Josuah Sylvester translated the work into English verse in 1605 with the title The first Weeke or Birth of the World of the Noble, learned and divine W. Salustius, Lord of Bartas.⁴ It covers a vaster field of science than that covered by St Basil and St Ambrose. Once again, the subjects are the same: First day--light; second day--water, mist, snow, hail, winds, thunder, lightning, rainbow, flood and storm; third day--water, the sea and the question of ebb and flow and why it is salty; fountains and springs; catalogues of plants and emphasis on the great variety of plants and of their colours and form; catalogues of minerals; minerals as underground treasures; the loadstone; fourth day--

¹(Geneva, 1564).

²A section of Brockes' Drey Reiche is very like a passage from Viret on the uses of iron for peace and war.

³See also Albert-Marie Schmidt, La Poésie scientifique en France au seizième siècle (Paris, [1938]).

⁴I am quoting from this edition but will give the original text from the 1581 Geneva edition of La Sepmaine in footnotes.

the discussion of the heavenly bodies (Ptolemaic system); fifth day--catalogues of fish and fowl; comments on the great variety of creatures and the lessons which man can learn from them; sixth day--man as God's masterpiece; discussion of the parts of the body. God has finished his work on the seventh day and is compared to a painter or an architect who sits back and admires his work. Man is also enjoined to admire it and to meditate on the seventh day.

Besides the close association of science and theology, there are many other subjects in the Sepmaine which we have noted in Brockes and the other writers. God created the world ex nihilo by his word (p. 236)¹ and found that it was good. God is the first Mover (p. 235),² characterized by his wisdom and power (p. 236).³ He is a provident God who has made the world for man, his masterpiece and viceroy (pp. 206-207).⁴ Such a God is not the absentee deist God, not "an idle God,/That lusk in Heau'n and neuer looks abroad,"⁵ "A Pagan Idol, void of power and pietie,/A sleeping Dormouse (rather) a dead Deitie" (p. 235).⁶ God sustains his creation (continuous creation) and is active in it:

¹I, 193.

²II, 396.

³I, 148.

⁴The sixth day deals with the creation of man, the last link in creation (VI, 428), God's image (905 ff.) and representative (466, 476, 520, 925 ff.), and "vn second Dieu" (460).

⁵Du Bartas accuses Epicurus of inventing a lazy God: "Tu dormois Epicure, encor plus que ton Dieu,/Quand tu fantastiquois vn lethargique au lieu/De la source de la vie..." (VII, 111-113).

⁶VII, 104.

For, O how often had this goodly Ball
By his owne Greatnes caus'd his proper fall?
How often had this World deceast, except
Gods mighty armes had it vpheld and kept?
God is the soule, the life, the strength, and sinney,
That quickens, moues, and makes this Frame continue.
(p. 236)

Divine workmanship in creation reflects God and
there is pleasure in contemplating it:

It glads me much to view this Frame; wherein,
As in a Glasse God's glorious face is seene...²
(p. 6)

Many of the motifs which we noted in the previous chapter³
are associated with the idea of the world as a book:

The World's a Schoole, where (in a generall Storie)
God always reades dumbe Lectures of his Glorie:
A paire of Staires, whereon by certaine steps,⁴
Our mounting Soule about Heau'ns arches leapes.
(pp. 6 - 7)

The World is a "wealthy Shop of wonders," "a Bridge," "a
Cloud," a "Stage, where God's Omnipotence,/His Iustice,
Knowledge, Loue, and Prouidence,/Doo act their parts;"
"The World's a Booke in Folio, printed all/With God's
great Workes in Letters Capitall:/Each Creature, is a
Page, and each effect,/A faire Character, void of all de-
fect" (p. 7).⁵ It is a book

¹Above, p. 82. "Dieu est l'ame, le nerf, la vie, l'efficace,/ Qui anime, qui meut, qui soustient ceste masse" (VII, 143-144).

²"Il me plait bien de voir ceste ronde machine,/Comme estant un miroir de la face diuine" (I, 119-120).

³Above, ch. III.

⁴"Vrayment cest vniuers est vne docte eschole/Où Dieu son propre honneur enseigne sans parole:/Vne vis à repos, qui par certains degrez/Fait monter nos esprits sur les planchers sacrez/Du ciel porte-brandons..." (I, 135-139).

⁵"Le monde est vn grand livre, où du souuerain maistre/L'admirable artifice on lit en grosse lettre./Chasque oeuvre est vne page, & chasque sien effect/ Est vn beau caractere en tous ses traits parfaict" (I, 151-154).

Where learned Nature rudest ones instructs,
That by his wisdom God the World conducts.
To read this Booke, we neede not vnderstand
Each Strangers gibbrish; neither take in hand
Turkes Characters, nor Hebrue Points to seeke,
Nyle's Hieroglyphikes, nor the Notes of Greeke.¹
(p. 7)

The person who weares "the spectacles of Faith,/Sees
through the Spheares about their highest height:/He com-
prehends th'Arch-moouer of all Motions..." (p. 8).

One aspect of the theme that God is visible in
creation is worth mentioning as it is very typical of
Brockes and not of the English writers with whom we have
associated him. The senses are a means of reaching God:

God, of himselfe incapable to sence,
In's Works reueales him t'our intelligence:
There in our fingers feelee, our nostrils smell,
Our Palats taste his vertues that excell:
He shewes him to our eyes, talkes to our eares,²
In th'ord'red motions of the spangled Spheares.
(p. 6)

Prayers and invocations are also found interpolated
in the text. The work opens with a request for help in the
poetic project: "With learned Arte enrich this Worke of
mine" (p. 1).

Graunt (gracious God) that I record in verse
The rarest Beauties of this Vniuerse;

¹The world is a book "...où la docte Nature/Enseigne aux
plus grossiers, qu'une Diuinité/Police de ses loix ceste
ronde Cité./Pour lire là dedans il ne nous faut entendre/
Cent sortes de iargons, il ne nous faut aprendre/Les
caracteres Turcs, de Memphe les pourtrets,/Ni les points
des Hebreux, ni les notes des Grecs" (I, 160-166). It is
interesting to compare this to Brockes' "Himmlische Schrift"
where we are told that we have to learn the cryptic
characters of a new language in order to read the book of
the heavens (above p. 94).

²"Dieu qui ne peut tomber és lourds sens des humains,/Se
rend comme visible és oeuvres de ses mains:/Fait toucher
à nos doigts, flairer à nos narines,/Gouster à nos palais
ses vertus plus diuines:/Parle à nous à toute heure, ayant
pour truchemens/Des paillons astrez les reglez mouuemens"
(I, 129-134).

And graunt therein, thy power I may discerne,
That teaching others, I my selfe may learne.¹
(p. 2)

Du Bartas' aim is "To write to th'honour of my Maker
dread," and he calls on the "Cleare Source of Learning,
soule of th'Vniuerse" to make his pen "distill/Celestiall
Nectar" (pp. 32-33).

Admired Artist, Architect deuine,
Perfect and peer-les in all Works of thine,
So my rude hand on this rough Table guide
To paint the Prince of all thy works beside,
That graue Spectators, in his face may spie
Apparent marks of thy Deuinitie.²
(p. 208)

Du Bartas still retains allegory and classical
mythology. The palm, as in the emblem tradition, repre-
sents chastity (p. 249). The sun is called Phoebus; there
are Trytons; and Neptune and Apollo are mentioned (p. 171).
There is spurious natural history of the type found in
Pliny (p. 177 Indian griffin, Phoenix). This differentiates
Du Bartas from Brookes. Apart from that, the subjects and
the motifs belong to the same literary tradition.

After Du Bartas there was a lull in the writing of
creation epics until the end of the century. Saint-Martin
published his L'Univers tiré du néant in 1690. The work
only treats the first two days of creation, that is to say,
light, darkness, rain, snow, hail, and so on. Although

¹"O Pere, donne moy que d'vne voix faconde/Ie chante à nos
neueux la naissance du monde./O grand Dieu, donne moy que
i'estale en mes vers/Les plus rares beautez de ce grand
vniuers./Donne moy qu'en son front ta puissance ie lise:/
Et qu'enseignant autrui moy-mesme ie m'instruise" (I, 7-12).

²"Architecte diuin, Ouurier plus qu'admirable,/Qui, parfait,
ne voids rien à toy semblable,/Sur ce rude tableau guide ma
lourde main,/Où ie tire si bien d'un pinceau non-humain/
Le Roy des animaux, qu'en sa face on remarque/De ta Diuinité
quelque euidente marque" (VI, 477-482).

scientific discoveries have been made since Du Bartas, Saint-Martin's cosmogony is essentially that of the medieval theologians. Sayce (p. 141) gives a list of the authorities quoted by Saint-Martin and tells us that it is disappointing from the scientific point of view.

Charles Perrault (1628-1703) wrote a Création du Monde (Paris, 1692) which deals with biblical history up to Solomon and is of little interest for our study since it does not reflect scientific progress. In spite of this, Sayce finds that both works (Saint-Martin and Perrault) show that the biblical epic "had evolved in accordance with the great intellectual developments of the time."

Torquato Tasso's Le sette giornate del mondo creato (Viterbo, 1607)¹ has most of the elements which we have been describing, the mixture of science, theology and philosophy. He also draws on the same authorities, the Bible and the Church Fathers.² He has much in common with St Basil,³ while the fascination which he finds in the frightening, hostile aspects of nature⁴ points ahead to a literary theme which will be quite important in this study.

¹Charles Peter Brand, Torquato Tasso, a study of the Poet and his Contribution to English Literature (Cambridge, 1965), pp. 189-200 discusses the work.

²Ibid., p. 190.

³Both mention the utility of wood for ships and firewood, the obedience of fish to God's will (Du Bartas also), the constancy of the turtle-dove, the cannibalism of fish which is a symbol of man's thirst for power. Their attitude to knowledge is also similar. Human learning and reason are limited but divine grace must illumine them.

⁴Ibid., p. 198. This has been suggested as the beginning of "la poetica del brutto."

Thomas Traherne, Meditations on the six days of the creation (1717)¹ is, as the title indicates, a hexaemeron. The usual subjects are dealt with in the order of creation--light, the firmament, rain, clouds, heavenly bodies, metals, sea, fish, fowl, plants, animals and man. Many of the motifs already discussed are present: the world is for man's use; rain falls in drops which shows God's goodness and wisdom; the structure of the human body is admirable; man looks upwards. The work is punctuated by biblical references especially from the Psalms, and by prayers and invocations. The work is in prose but at the end of each day there is a poem. Certain elements are absent. No attempt is made to discuss the question of the ebb and flow of the sea or of the presence of salt; the loadstone is not discussed; there are no catalogues of plants and animals and there is very little science. In fact, Traherne is in some ways rather backward and still thinks in terms of microcosm and macrocosm: "Anatomists and Philosophers have observed, that he [man] is a Tree reversed whose Head is his Root, his Legs and Arms, Fingers and Toes, the branches" (p. 80). The idea that the visible creation reveals the invisible is scarcely expressed and there is no mention of the motif of the "book of nature." There is a very definite appreciation of the beauty of the world (p. 33) but there is also much otherworldliness--the awareness of sin and human imperfection and prayers for grace, holiness and devotion to God. Traherne's God

¹Augustan Reprint Society, 1966, No. 119.

is different. He is a pure spirit (p. 82), an ocean of everlasting goodness (p. 88).

The fourth book of Johann Arndt's Vier Bücher vom wahren Christenthum (1606)¹ is in the hexaemeral tradition. It deals with the same scientific subjects within the framework of the Genesis account of creation, but with little scientific detail and knowledge. It starts with light, which Arndt says he does not understand. He concentrates instead on its symbolism--the purity of light, the light of God's love, Christ as the light of the world, the spiritual inner light of the soul. The world was created for man, the epitome of creation; God provides for him as he does for the beasts of the field (ch. vi). It is interesting to note that Arndt does not consider mountains to be ugly, but calls them the "Zierde der Erde" (ch. iii). (Marjorie Nicolson's Mountain Gloom suggests that, prior to the end of the seventeenth century, mountains were not considered beautiful.) Mountains are also "Gottes Schatz-Kammern, darin allerley Metal durch die Natur bereitet wird." The usual questions are treated--rain, clouds, the heavenly bodies, the sea with its "Menge der Fische" (ch. v), its saltiness and tides.

This section of Arndt's work is called the "Buch der Natur" and in this sense belongs to the ideas associated with this motif--the contemplation of God's wisdom in his creatures (introduction to ch. i) since "Alle Creaturen sind nur Gottes Spur und Fußstapfen, der Mensch aber ist

¹I am using the 1724 edition.

Gottes Bild...." God is invisible and incomprehensible but we may learn something of his nature through the contemplation of the heavenly bodies. Their immensity and "ihr beständiger und gewisser Lauf" are "ein groß Wunder und Zeugniß der unaussprechlichen Gewalt Gottes" (ch. iv).

Arndt gives his impression of the vastness of space:

Hie muß menschliche Vernunft aufhören zu denken.
Es ist die Höhe und Grösse des Himmels unausdenklich, und aller Vernunft unbegreiflich.

Because of this emphasis on the revelation of God in nature and because of the hexaemeral form, the fourth book of Arndt's Vom wahren Christenthum belongs to the hexaemeral tradition, but there are striking differences. The tendency to catalogue plants and animals and comment on their variety is absent. There is no discussion of the most common subject, the excellent workmanship displayed in the human anatomy. St Basil, Du Bartas and Tasso had some symbolism in their work, as has been mentioned, but this was by no means predominant. It is certainly not a characteristic of Brockes' scientific poems and the work of Ray, Derham and the others where the attention is really focussed on the external world which they observe in detail. In Arndt there is so much symbolism that one feels that the external world only exists to reflect spiritual ideas:

Was bedeutet die grosse Cirkel=Runde des Himmels
mehr, denn die Ewigkeit Gottes?
(ch. ii)

Arndt associates the sun with his religion:

Die Sonne ist eine Zierde des Himmels; Also Christus der Herr ist eine Zierde seiner Kirche, und des neuen Himmels und Erden in der zukünftigen Herrlichkeit...
(ch. i, p. 558)

The moon is the "Spiegel des Zorn Gottes, und Zeichen des jüngsten Tages." There is much talk of the devil, sin, God's wrath, and eternal torment throughout Arndt's work; this gives it a different emphasis from Brockes' Irdisches Vergnügen. There are signs of corruption everywhere:

Die Finsternisse verkündigen und bringen allerley Jammer auf Erden, Hunger, Krieg und Pestilenz, welches alles die Menschen verursachen; Denn all Creaturen und die ganze Natur ändert sich, und hat ihr Leiden und Angst; welches Leiden der grossen Welt hernach auch (als in Microcosmo) im Menschen volbracht wird.

(Bk. IV, ch. iv, p. 597)

Brockes does not consider man to be so wicked nor the world as a "schlammvolles Gefängnis." The idea of mortifying the flesh would meet with his disapproval. He would however agree with Arndt that God's goodness can be tasted in his work (ch. iii).

Lucretius, as we have noted, was an example for those poets who attempted to blend science and poetry.¹ He deals with similar scientific material but his aim is totally different. If we understand the laws behind things (the nature of things, physical science) we will be liberated from those fears which paralyse us--fear of the gods and fear of death. The other writers whose work we have studied were concerned with demonstrating how creation depends on God but Lucretius attempts to show its independence. To coin a word, his poem De Rerum Natura is an "anti-hexaemeron." The world was not created by the gods

¹The way in which he combined science and poetry was also admired in Brockes' circle. Weichmann, Preface to volume II Ird. Verg.

at all and it did not come into being out of nothing (ex nihilo). "Nil igitur fieri de nilo posse fatendumst" ("We must admit therefore that nothing can come from nothing..." Bk. I, 205). Instead, the universe was formed of matter (atoms) and space (void) by the motion of the atoms. No deity is needed to explain this motion--it is caused by the weight of the atoms which move downwards quicker than the speed of light. When they swerve and collide they form atomic systems, that is, things (Bk. II, 62-332). Ray, Derham and the others were concerned with the power and wisdom of God. Lucretius believes that the gods exist in a state of bliss outside a world which does not concern them in any way. They did not create it and are not interested in its affairs. Lucretius' world does not demonstrate wisdom, in fact, its very defects are proof of the absence of providence and divine control. He argues that "the nature of the world has by no means been made for us by divine power: so great are the defects with which it stands encumbered" (II, 180-181). It is sheer folly to say "that for the sake of men they [the gods] have willed to set in order the glorious nature of the world and therefore it is meet to praise the work of the gods...."¹

The defects of creation to which Lucretius draws attention influence his opponents by stimulating their counter-arguments.

In the first place of all the space which the vast reach of heaven covers, a portion greedy mountains and forests of wild beasts have occupied, rocks and wasteful pools take up and the sea which holds wide apart the coasts of different lands. Next of

¹V, 156-234.

nearly two thirds burning heat and the constant
fall of frost rob mortals.

(V, 200 ff.)

Any land which is left can only be cultivated with great
toil. After this, the farmer faces the total destruction
of his crop through inclement weather. "Again why does
nature give food and increase to the frightful race of
wild beasts dangerous to mankind both by sea and land?"
The writings of Ray, Derham and Brookes attempt to answer
these and similar questions and their answers develop
into literary motifs. Brookes finds something positive to
say about deserts:

Auch die unfruchtbarsten Plätze,
Ja die dickste Wüsteney,
Zeigen, durch verborg'ne Schätze,
Daß sie unerschöpflich sey,
Ihre Güter uns zu geben.
Wärme, Fruchtbarkeit und Leben
Zieht sie aus der Sonnen Gluht,
Etwa wie ein Schwamm die Fluth.
(Die Erde, stanza 51)

Professor McKillop in the chapter "Distant Climes"¹ dis-
cusses Thomson's descriptions of the torrid and frigid
zones. It is interesting to note how much more complex
the Lucretian themes have become in The Seasons:

The barbarous opulence of the tropics, the extreme
display of the powers of nature, may deepen into
downright horror or be refined into idyllic beauty.

Besides the influence of writers like Ray and Derham who
emphasize the positive aspects of creation, books on travel
also contribute to the re-assessment:

Ancient geography had taught that the tropics were
uninhabitable, but various reasons--a better know-
ledge of geography, a quest for the earthly paradise,
eagerness to point out the beneficent works of God
in the creation, and propaganda for conquest and

¹McKillop, p. 129 ff.

colonization--led later writers to show how Providence saw to it that the regions under the line were made not only inhabitable but delightful. Such a demonstration was considered one of the chief triumphs of modern geography.
(p. 148)

Yet another factor is a growing interest in the wilder aspects of nature which we shall have to discuss later in more detail. The treatment of storm and plague--subjects from Lucretius and Virgil--is part of this development.

Lucretius' influence was considerable.¹ While many deplored his "atheism", their imagination was caught by much of his poetry which was often at its best when he was inconsistent. A.P. Sinker mentions this in a section entitled "L'anti-Lucrèce chez Lucrèce" in his Introduction to Lucretius (Cambridge, 1962), p. xviii ff.:

Anyone who reads the de R.N. is bound to be impressed by the passionate intensity and sincerity of Lucretius' tone. He writes with a passion strangely at variance with the passionless state of mind that he advocates as man's true ideal. He writes with a depth of conviction that is not easily reached without a profound inner conflict.

As an Epicurean who believes in the superiority of evidence from the senses, Lucretius held that the sun and moon were as large as they appear. At one point, however, an element of doubt creeps in:

For when we turn our gaze on the heavenly quarters of the great upper world, and ether fast above glittering stars, and direct our thoughts to the courses of the sun and moon, then into our breasts

¹ Amy Louise Reed, The Background of Gray's Elegy: A Study in the Taste for Melancholy Poetry 1700-1751 (New York, 1962), pp. 37-38: "Allusions to his [Lucretius'] ideas, imitations of his descriptive metaphors and similes, became imbedded in the philosophical prose and the reflective poetry of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and are distinctly traceable for a long time in the work of individual poets."

burdened with other ills that fear as well begins to exalt its re-awakened head, the fear that we may haply find the power of the gods to be unlimited, able to wheel the bright stars in their varied motion.¹

Although the main argument of De Rerum Natura is directed against the fear of death, it is the following anti-Lucretian lapse which has proved to be most eloquent:

Now no more shall thy house admit thee with glad welcome, nor a most virtuous wife and sweet children run to be the first to snatch kisses and touch thy heart with a silent joy.

(III, 895 ff.)

These words have echoed ever since in the poetry of many lands.²

Virgil's Georgics (c. 36-30 B.C.) do not really fit into the category of works which we have been discussing except that they may be said to combine science and poetry, science being agriculture--instructions to farmers on the cultivation of crops, breeding of stock, beekeeping and the care of orchards and vines. Like Lucretius, Virgil was very influential and contributed many subjects to the poetry of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.³ The Georgics have a number of elements which are typical of the literature which we have been discussing. Each book starts with an invocation to some deity. There is a prayer at the end of Book I and a hymn to spring in Book II. Thomson was very enthusiastic about "Me uero primum dulces.." (Bk. II, 475 ff.) which he called the "Rapture of the Ages" in his preface to Winter and translated. He also adapted it as an invocation to Nature--"Oh, Nature! all-

¹Quoted by Sinker, op.cit., pp. xxi-xxii.

²Gray's "Elegy" is the most famous example.

³Elizabeth Nitchie, Virgil and the English Poets (New York, 1959).

sufficient! over all!"¹ This is part of the famous "O fortunatus nimium" passage, that idealization of country life which is akin to the themes of primitivism and of the Golden Age so widespread in literature.² It joins the stream of ideas from the Old Testament Eden to Hesiod, Ovid and Horace.

The interest in storms has already been mentioned. Virgil's storm is part of his didactic intention--farmers need to forecast the weather on which they are so dependent. Eighteenth-century writers are interested in the storm for other reasons, generally for the manifestation of power. Both Brockes and Thomson have storm scenes which

¹McKillop, p. 15, discusses this. See also, above pp. 99-100. Autumn, 1352-1373.

²Primitivism is not one of Brockes' most dominant themes but it comes into several of his poems. It is briefly discussed in the following works: Erich Albrecht, Primitivism and Related Ideas in eighteenth century German Lyric Poetry 1680-1740 (Baltimore, 1950) and Hans M. Wolff, Die Weltanschauung der deutschen Aufklärung (Bern, 1949), p. 144. In Brockes we find two kinds of primitivism--the glorification of a former age such as the age of Adam before the Fall, and the idea that country life is superior to town life, "Betrachtung des Schöpfers in seinen Werken" (VII, 417). Retirement gives Brockes the feeling that he is really alive: "An diesem abgelegnen Ort, entfernt vom Städtischen Getümmel/Erweg und fühl ich, daß ich lebe....." (VII, 181, Tübingen; Hamburg, p. 197). He escapes from the cares and troubles of the world: "In dieser abgelegnen stillen und angenehmen Einsamkeit,/Wo ich, in ruhigem, vernünftig= und edlem Müssigang, empfinde,/Wie ich, von Unruh, Zank und Sorgen, Verdruß und wildem Lärm befreyt,/Recht als im Hafen angelendet, mich endlich in mir selber finde" (VIII, 89, Tübingen; Hamburg, p. 105). Another example: Metzler, p. 161. Primitivism is an important subject in Thomson's Seasons and is discussed by A.D. McKillop in the chapter on "The Golden Age," pp. 89-128.

resemble Virgil's description (Georgics, I, 312-36).¹

They do not reproduce Virgil exactly but give the general picture of a storm building up with its roaring winds which tear up crops and trees. The dark clouds break and fill the streams and ditches which, like the billows of the sea, sweep over the land, carrying away crops. Brockes and Thomson make their descriptions much more terrifying. In Thomson's storm "herds, flocks, and harvests, cottages and swains,/Roll mingled down, all that the winds had spared/In one wild moment ruined, the big hopes/And well-earned treasure of the painful year."² Brockes describes the rising water which foams and rages like waves of the sea:

Von jeder Welle scheint ein feuchter Tod,
Der unvermeidlich ist, uns gräßlich unzublecken,
Und seinen schwartzen Arm schon nach uns auszustrecken.³

Brockes' poem expands the description of the storm for seven pages and concentrates on its terror and violence:

Ein steter Wolcken=Bruch stürzt' eine dicke Fluth,
Mit brausendem Geräusch, von oben durch die Gluth,
Daß beydes rauscht und zischt, beströmt' das trockne Feld,
Verschluckte das Getraid'; ein all=erschütternd Krachen
Brach allenthalben aus; es zitterte die Welt...

Virgil mentions Jove's thunderbolts⁴ but Brockes describes

¹Will Richter in his commentary on this section of the Georgics (I, 316-334) says that Virgil owes much to Lucretius "dennoch versteht es der Dichter aus dieser subtilen musischen Arbeit ein wirkungsvolles künstlerisches Ganzes zu machen. Seine innere Eigengestalt gewinnt es gewiß in erster Linie durch eine neue, dem lukrezischen Geist fremde stoische Idee der gottgewollten Weltordnung, die auch im Unwetter waltet, aber doch gleichzeitig auch durch den geschlossenen gegenständlichen Aufbau, dem die Entlehnungen nur als Bausteine dienen" (Vergil Georgica, Das Wort der Antike, vol. V, p. 161).

²Autumn, 340-343.

³Metzler, p. 272.

⁴Line 328, also 370.

thunder and lightning in considerable detail:

Der Donner rollt' und kracht'. Blitz, Ströme, Strahlen,
Schlossen
Vermischten ihre Wuth; die rothen Flammen flossen,
Und wallten überall, als wie ein feurig Meer,
In der geborst'nen Luft entsetzlich hin und her...

The world trembles, "der gantze Luft=Kreis zittert." It is as if his imagination were fired by the idea of the world in turmoil and he wished to exploit it to the full and even make it larger than life:

Die Berge wanckten recht; es riß die schwartze Luft
Die düstern Pforten auf; sie schien ein weiter Rachen,
Voll Flammen, Dampf und Gluht, ja eine Höllen=Gruft,
In deren lichte Pful und ungeheuren Tiefe
Ein schütternd Strahlen=Heer, daß Licht erschrecklich hell
Bald rund, bald Schlangen=weis', und unbeschreiblich
schnell,
Mit zackigter Bewegung, liefe.

After the storm in Virgil's account, the sky clears and there is a concert of birds. Thomson does not develop this but Brockes fills out the picture of the beauty of the countryside after the storm:

Die Wiesen funckelten; es glänzte Feld und Wald;
Ja selbst die Sonne wies', in tausend feuchten Spiegeln,
Auf dem genetzten Laub', die flammende Gestalt.

He describes the fresh scent of the air, then the peasants who emerge quite happily from their cottages. He has, of course, forgotten that these could scarcely have survived the intensity of the storm which he has described, but he is interested in a happy ending. (Thomson's storm was tragic and Virgil's peaceful.)

Das Land=Volck kommt gemach aus den bemooßten Hütten.
Zu Anfang bleibet es an Zäun= und Hecken stehn,
Schaut allenthalben hin, und wenn sie endlich sehn,
Daß Weitzen, Obst und Dach noch nicht so viel gelitten,
Als sie, in Angst, geglaubt, und daß sie Wind und Fluth
Nicht viel beschädiget, ist alles wohlgemuth,
Und lebt von neuem auf, wie man im Lentzen thut.

The storm descriptions of Brockes and Thomson contain the essentials of Virgil's storm with many variations and additions. Otto Zippel,¹ on these grounds, gives Virgil as Thomson's source. One could therefore suggest that Virgil is also Brockes' source as long as it is remembered that poems about storms were very popular at the period and that other sources were available. Also, storms being similar throughout the world, it is inevitable that two different reports will have some points in common.

Virgil's advice to farmers includes the question of breeding stock, and within this framework he describes the breeding habits of animals. This again is placed by Brockes and Thomson in their own context. They describe very vividly the "furious flame" and "hot impulse" of the bull and stallion. For Thomson, the new context is what he calls "the infusive power of spring" whose source is in God:

What is this mighty breath, ye curious, say,
That in a powerful language, felt not heard,
Instructs the fowls of heaven, and through their breast
These arts of love diffuses? What but God?
Inspiring God! who, boundless spirit all,
And unremitting energy, pervades,
Adjusts, sustains, and agitates the whole.
(Spring, 848-854)

Brockes treats this subject in the context of his scientific poems Betrachtungen über die drey Reiche der Natur (Vol. IX), where he is dealing with the scientific aspects of reproduction. But here Brockes leaves the more objective context to underline his own personal interests--

¹"Thomson's 'Seasons'", Palaestra, LXVI (1908).

„die Spuren der Gottheit, in diesem Werk der Lieb'“ for,
Ohn diese Theilung der Geschlechter wär' alle
Süßigkeit der Triebe,
Das allerzärtlichste Vergnügen, der Lüste Quelle,
kurz, die Liebe,
Die Mutter holder Regungen, voll Sanft- und Anmuth,
aus der Welt
Und fast die meiste Freude fort....
(p. 227)

Virgil's influence on the language of poetry was very great. Professor Tillotson writes about eighteenth-century poetry:

By virtue of the words and phrases borrowed or adapted from Virgil, the nature-poems of the eighteenth century have a quality which is usually denied them, the quality of "atmosphere". The diction is coloured with the Virgilian connotation.¹

We must also remember the context of Virgil's poem. Tillotson gives quite a good example. The word "care," a favorite of Augustan poetic diction, is from "cura," the job of the shepherd or farmer. Myra Reynolds discusses poetic diction at greater length and concludes:

The stock poetic diction may serve also to illustrate the indebtedness of the English classical poets to their Latin masters in the matter of phraseology.²

Richard Blackmore (1654-1729) was a physician who dabbled in poetry. His early attempts earned for him criticism and ridicule but his long poem Creation, a philosophical poem, in seven books (1712) established him as a successful poet. Addison in the Spectator 339 praised it and Dr. Johnson in his brief life of Blackmore

¹Geoffrey Tillotson, Augustan Poetic Diction (London, 1964), p. 36.

²Myra Reynolds, The Treatment of Nature in English Poetry (Chicago, 1909), p. 46.

says that it was praised by Dennis as "a philosophical poem which has equalled that of Lucretius in the beauty of its versification, and infinitely surpassed it in the solidity and strength of its reasoning." His arguments are developed especially in books III and IV which are directed against atheists, since he was concerned about "the growth of prophaneness, and the prevailing power of loose and irreligious principles in this nation" (p. 328). The poet Henry Needler, in a poem to Blackmore on his Creation, triumphantly maintained that Blackmore had vanquished Lucretius by his eloquence.¹

With Blackmore we return to poetry which is inspired by the Genesis story and the work of the scientists. The poem, although it consists of seven books, is not within the framework of the hexaemeral. "I have chosen to demonstrate the existence of a God from the marks of wisdom, design, contrivance, and the choice of ends and means, which appear in the universe" (p. 331). Blackmore's summary of his poem is quite useful:

The design of this work is to demonstrate the existence of a Divine Eternal Mind. The arguments used for this end are taken from the various marks of wisdom and artful contrivance, which are evident to observation in the several parts of the material world, and the faculties of the human soul. The first book contains the proof of a Deity, from the instances of design and choice, which occur in the structure and qualities of the earth and sea. The second pursues the proof of the same proposition, THERE IS A GOD, from the celestial motions, and more fully from the appearances in the solar system, and the air. In the third, the objections which are brought by atheistical philosophers against the hypothesis established in the two preceding books

¹The Works of Henry Needler (The Augustan Reprint Society, publication No. 90, 1961), p. 52.

are answered. In the fourth, is laid down the hypothesis of the Atomists or Epicureans, and other irreligious philosophers, and confuted. In the fifth, the doctrine of the Fatalists, or Aristotelians, who make the world to be eternal, is considered and subverted. In the sixth, the argument of the two first books is resumed, and the existence of God demonstrated from the prudence and art discovered in the several parts of the body of man. In the seventh, the same demonstration is carried on from the contemplation of the instincts in brute animals, and the faculties and operations of the soul of man. The book concludes with a recapitulation of what has been treated of, and a hymn to the Creator of the World.

(p. 336)

It is obvious from this summary that Creation belongs to the background which has been analysed in this and in the earlier chapters. The themes are all there and are repeated from book to book, so that they become crystallized in poetic form. Creation is not the product of chance but was called into existence from nothing (ex nihilo) by God's fiat. It is a book in which one can read about the wisdom and power of God.

As in the works of Ray and Derham, the main idea is that the beauty and order of the visible creation reveal the Creator. Since Blackmore is a physician, he is able to deal with anatomy in considerable detail so that we find a versification of Harvey's ideas on the circulation of the blood. The nervous system and the digestive system are also described in detail. The efficiency with which the body works and the suitability of all the organs for the purposes which they are required to serve are indicated throughout as proofs of the wisdom of God. Climatic features are also discussed as evidence of God's existence and of his providential care in supplying man's needs:

This thin, this soft contexture of the air,
Shows the wise Author's providential care....
(p. 350, column 1)

Blackmore, like the others, makes considerable use of hypothetical arguments in order to explain that everything is exactly as it should be. If it were made in any other way or situated in any other place, then it would be imperfect and threaten the balance of the whole. Of the air he argues:

Had not the Maker wrought the springy frame
Such as it is, to fan the vital flame,
The blood, defrauded of its nitrous food,
Had cool'd and languish'd in th'arterial road....
(p. 350, c. 1)

Winds and gales also show God's goodness as they cool the air. Together with the melting snows from the mountains they save the land in the torrid zone:

So constant winds, as well as rivers, flow
From your high hills, enrich'd with stores of snow;
For this great end, these hills rise more sublime
Than those erected in a temperate clime.
Had not the Author this provision made,
By which your air is cool'd, your Sun allay'd,
Destroy'd by too intense a flame, the land
Had lain a parch'd inhospitable sand.
(p. 350, c. 2)

The sun's situation is also exactly right; Blackmore gives many examples of what would be our fate if this were not so, and concludes:

Thus, had the Sun's bright orb been more remote,
The cold had kill'd; and, if more near, the drought.
(p. 346, c. 1)

Blackmore's arguments for God's wisdom are the usual ones. Only "a conscious Agent, could provide/The spacious hollow where the waves reside...." The salt in the sea and the tides show great wisdom, for the water is kept free

from putrefaction by these means. The mountains are very useful for their streams, vegetation, and mineral wealth. (Blackmore is refuting Lucretius' argument that they are useless.) The changing seasons testify to God's bounty and wisdom. Like the others, Blackmore asks about the instincts of animals within the framework of his anti-Lucretian arguments:

Say, what contexture did by chance arrive,
Which to brute creatures did that instinct give,
Whence they at sight discern and dread their foe,
Their food distinguish, and their physic know?
(p. 376, c. 2)

Not only the visible world but the mysterious invisible world is a proof of God. The question of motion has not been solved by Lucretius¹ but is

A power to nature given by Nature's Lord,
When first he spoke the high creating word,
When for his world materials he prepar'd,
And on each part this energy conferr'd.
(p. 359, c. 2)

Cohesion, magnetic force and the motions of the planets are also attributed to God.

A Mind Supreme you therefore must approve,
Whose high command caus'd matter first to move;
Who still preserves its course, and, with respect
To his wise ends, all motions does direct.
(p. 344, c. 2)

This is the God who is active in his creation, not the idle God or the aloof Aristotelian God:

Who sits supinely on his azure throne,
In contemplation of himself alone;
Is wholly mindless of the world, and void
Of providential care, and unemploy'd.
(p. 366, c. 1)

¹According to Lucretius the world came into being through the swerve of falling atoms (above p. 128), but he did not explain why they swerved. This weakness in his system was attacked by many including Blackmore (p. 357, columns 1-2). Blackmore like the others solves this problem by attributing motion to God.

The human mind is limited:

The old and new astronomers, in vain,
Attempt the heavenly motions to explain.

The mind employ'd in search of secret things,
To find out motion's cause and hidden springs,
Through all th'ethereal regions mounts on high,
Views all the spheres, and ranges all the sky;
Searches the orbs, and penetrates the air,
With unsuccessful toil, and fruitless care;
Till, stopp'd by awful heights, and gulphs immense
Of Wisdom, and of vast Omnipotence,
She trembling stands, and does in wonder gaze,
Lost in the wide inextricable maze.

(p. 348, c. 1)

This is reminiscent of some of the motifs which have already been discussed, the problem of knowledge and the cosmic journey.¹

Blackmore's attitude to philosophy is negative. We find it together with the theme of primitivism and the Golden Age. Man was happy before he concerned himself with philosophy:

Through metaphysic wilds he never flew,
Nor the dark haunts of school chimeras knew,
But had alone his happiness in view.
He milk'd the lowing herd, he press'd the cheese,
Folded the flock, and spun the woolly fleece.

(p. 351, c. 2)

Then came architecture, literature and music, then philosophy:

Greece did at length a learned race produce,
Who needful science mock'd, and arts of use,
Consum'd their fruitless hours in eager chase
Of airy notions, through the boundless space
Of speculation, and the darksome void,
Where wrangling wits, in endless strife employ'd,
Mankind with idle subtilties embroil,
And fashion systems with romantic toil;
These, with the pride of dogmatizing schools,
Impos'd on Nature arbitrary rules;
Forc'd her their vain inventions to obey,
And move as learned frenzy trac'd the way:

¹Above, p. 100.

Above the clouds while they presum'd to soar,
Her trackless heights ambitious to explore,
And heaps of undigested volumes writ,
Illusive notions of fantastic wit;
So long they Nature search'd, and mark'd her laws,
They lost the knowledge of th'Almighty Cause.
(p. 352, c. 1)

This seems to contradict the idea behind the poem Creation which depends for most of its arguments on philosophy and knowledge, but Blackmore distinguishes between philosophy (vain Philosophy) and knowledge which arises from the light of Nature:

The notions, which arise from Nature's light,
As well adorn the mind, as guide her right,
Enlarge her compass, and improve her sight.
These ne'er the breast with vain ambition fire,
But banish pride, and modest thoughts inspire.
By her inform'd, we blest religion learn,
Its glorious object by her aid discern;
The rolling worlds around us we survey,
Th'alternate sovereigns of the night and day;
View the wide Earth adorn'd with hills and woods,
Rich in her herds, and fertile by her floods;
Walk through the deep apartments of the main,
Ascend the air to visit clouds and rain;
And, while we ravish'd gaze on Nature's face,
Remark her order, and her motions trace,
The long coherent chain of things, we find,
Leads to a Cause Supreme, a wise Creating Mind.
(p. 352, c. 1)

Blackmore obviously intends to make clear that "Nature's light" provides knowledge of a different order from that of "vain philosophy," yet he seems to include in his conception of natural religion the more logical idea of cause and effect. He seems to object to the vagueness and sophistry of the Greeks, yet his proposal to study religion by ascending into the air and gazing on Nature's face is also vague. Such a contradiction is typical of the background¹ to which this poem, like the poems of

¹The background in which science, logic and philosophy are being transformed into poetry.

Brockes, belong. Brockes' poetry is full of contradictions about the accessibility of knowledge. Another instance of the general dilemma is found in Thomson's hymnic passage on "Philosophy" in the Seasons (Summer, 1730 ff.). Thomson does the opposite and lauds Philosophy as the "Effusive source of evidence and truth." Philosophy enables the mind to rise:

Above the tangling mass of low desires
That bind the fluttering crowd, and, angel-winged,
The heights of science and of virtue gains
Where all is calm and clear, with nature round,
Or in the starry regions or the abyss,
To reason's and to fancy's eye displayed,-
The first up-tracing from the dreary void
The chain of causes and effects to Him,
The world-producing Essence, who alone
Possesses being...

Without philosophy man would be a savage without skill and without law. Thomson continues in the most enthusiastic language to outline the benefits of philosophy, its ability to explore "the radiant tracts on high," "to conceive/Of the Sole Being right, who spoke the word,/And Nature moved complete." But as the poet soars optimistically with the thought of infinite knowledge, he encounters its limits:

But here the cloud
(So wills Eternal Providence) sits deep.
Enough for us to know that this dark state,
In wayward passions lost and vain pursuits,
This infancy of being, cannot prove
The final issue of the works of God,
By boundless love and perfect wisdom formed,
And ever rising with the rising mind.

Since Blackmore's Creation appeared in 1712 it could have been a source for Brockes' poetry. All the themes are there. Since Blackmore was praised in the Spectator which circulated freely and was much appreciated in Germany, it

is probable that Brockes knew about the work, if he did not have access to a copy. As far as I know he does not mention Blackmore. But it should be apparent from what has been written so far that Brockes could have written his poems without consulting Blackmore, as all the ideas were commonplaces. Blackmore in his preface writes:

I may with reason presume, that I shall not incur any censure for not employing new arguments to prove the being of a God; none but what have been produced before by many writers, even from the eldest days of philosophy.
(p. 331)

His originality, he feels, consists in clothing the ideas in poetic form and adapting them to "the general apprehension and capacity of mankind."

Thomson's Seasons¹ belongs to the literary tradition outlined in this chapter but it also surpasses it since it has been considerably enriched by material from other sources. The same themes and ideas which evolved from the Genesis story are found within the framework of the changing seasons. The discussion of the elements, the heavenly bodies, plants and animals incorporates later scientific material and is more up-to-date than the other works since Thomson was writing later. Much of the science has been successfully transformed into poetry while some has remained undigested. McKillop's book on the background

¹James Thomson (1700-1748), published his long poem between 1726 and 1730. Revised editions followed. Brockes' Ird. Verg. (1721-1748) contained adaptations of parts of the Seasons from 1740 until the complete translation of Die Jahreszeiten (1745).

to the Seasons shows how much science it contains.¹ Since Brockes was already writing in the same vein from the first volume of his Irdisches Vergnügen, we have no reason to study it in detail as a possible source. Both writers were obviously drawing on similar sources in circulation before 1721, the sources with which the previous chapters have been dealing.

¹McKillop gives the background to the following scientific subjects: The new revelations of the microscope (p. 48); botany (p. 55); Newton (p. 59) and Newton's account of the solar spectrum (p. 61); a technical discussion of freezing (p. 60); earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions (p. 68); thunder and lightning (p. 71); the circulation of vapours and the supply of water to rivers (pp. 77-78).

CHAPTER V

BROCKES AND PLATONISM

Brockes sometimes speaks of nature as if it were an independent being. This is true of his scientific poems and of the rest of his poetry. Nature is an active power which forms and creates. Brockes tells us

Daß die bewegende, die bildende Natur
Solch auserlesene vollkommene Figur,
Gantz sonder Hand, formir't; wie sie die Zäser lencket,
So Kunst=reich, sonder Kunst, und, ohne Regel, recht.
(IV, 169)

Nature is often personified. Brockes admires "Die wunderbare Kunst der bildenden Natur" (Metzler, p. 332) and "die spielende Natur" who forms flowers "mit geschäft'gen Fingern" (Metzler, p. 379). This usage is mostly to be found in the context of plant growth:

Itzt müht sich die Natur, mit arbeitsamer Hand,
Den dunckel=braunen Sammt, der Erde schön Gewand,
Mit Bluhm= und Laub=werck reich zu sticken,
Mit tausend Farben auszuschmücken
Recht sichtbar sieht man sie
Die rege Nadel emsig führen...
(I, 57)

In a poem "Mißbrauch des Worts Natur" (VI, 310-313), Brockes seems to be against the above usage. Two things are idolatrous, he tells us (1) to consider God as an old man and (2) to associate the Goddess Nature with God. He objects to the "Sprichwort" (it is actually a well-known quotation from Aristotle's De Coelo I, 4) "Es wirken Gott und die Natur nie was vergebens," on the grounds that it makes two separate beings out of God and jeopardizes our worship. Yet, in his own poem "Die Erde," Brockes expresses

the same idea "Daß der Schöpfer aller Sachen/Durch die wirckende Natur/Nichts vergeblich wollen machen,/Zeiget jede Creatur..." (Stanza 21). He has, of course, made a slight attempt to subordinate Nature to the Creator here. In another poem about the advent of spring, which some attribute to the spirit of Nature (Naturgeist), Brockes admits that he is not sure whether it is "ein eigenes Wesen" (IX, 315).

This usage is very common in the writings of the time.¹ The distinction between God and Nature is not clearly made. Sometimes Nature is subordinate to God; Whiston mentions "God's vicegerent nature and her mechanical operations," Grew "Nature, the handmaid of divine wisdom with her fine needle and thread." She is sometimes considered as a "great parent" (Thomson), "a provident parent" (Leeuwenhoek). She is a being who must be courted and not commanded (Grew).² Sometimes she is even a religious power to whom one prays: "O Nature all-sufficient! over all!/"

¹Galileo, Dialogue concerning the two chief world systems - Ptolemaic and Copernican, trans. Stillman Drake (Berkeley, Cal., 1953) talks throughout of the "works of Nature." The growth of plants is "the work of the most wise Nature" (p. 102). J. Lewis McIntyre, Giordano Bruno (London, 1903), p. 197 gives an interesting passage from De Immenso: "Nature is not so miserably endowed as to be excelled by human art, which is directed by a kind of internal sense, while several kinds of animals, guided by their inward mind, show an innate foresight of a wonderful kind.For there is a nature which is more than present to, which is immanent in things...."

²Ernst Cassirer, The Platonic Renaissance in England, trans. James P. Pettegrove (Edinburgh, 1953), pp. 45, 193 gives other examples, including Goethe, Faust, Part II, 672-5.

Enrich me with the knowledge of thy works" (Thomson's Autumn, lines 1352 ff.). Brockes translates this as: "O Du, Dir selbst genügende, Du allerfüllende Natur!/Bereichre mich mit der Erkenntnis von Deinen Werken!"¹

This usage reminds us of the goddess Natura. Ernst Robert Curtius discusses works in which Natura plays a role.² In Claudian she is a powerful goddess, a cosmic power rather like Physis from the tenth of the anonymous Orphic hymns of the 3rd or 4th century. The goddess has over eighty predicates:

Sie ist die uralte Allmutter; Vater, Mutter, Amme, Nährtin; allweise, allschenkend, allherrschaftend; Ordnerin der Götter; Bildnerin; Erstgeborene; ewiges Leben und unsterbliche Vorsehung. (p. 114)

Another interesting point made by Curtius is that she "ist nicht Personifikation eines Begriffes. Sie ist eine der letzten religiösen Erfahrungen der spätheidnischen Welt" (p. 115). Natura in the work of Bernard Silvestris is similar to Claudian's Natura. She shares in the being of the Godhead, "aber sie ist auch der Materie verbunden." She has creative power for "sie hat die Materie geformt, den Gestirnen ihre Bahn gewiesen, die Erde mit dem Samen des Lebens begabt" (p. 118). She also participates in the creation of man. Alain of Lille's Natura has also created man. God was her teacher but while his work is perfect, hers is imperfect.

¹Ird. Verg., X, 425. Thomson's English text appears opposite Brockes' translation.

²Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter (Bern, 1948), pp. 114-135.

The picture presented by Curtius is, of course, more complex, as there are additional elements such as the fertility cult, which becomes associated with Natura at one point. I have simply mentioned what is particularly relevant to Brockes' use of the word "Nature"--the personification of nature and her relation to God and the world, as well as the powers attributed to her. The archetypal nature of the question is particularly interesting but a separate study would be required to develop such ideas.

Perhaps one might suggest the application of the idea of "natura naturans" to this use of the word "nature" but I find it has little to contribute on account of its lack of precision. It was used by several writers in the thirteenth century.¹ Professor Lovejoy in his well-known study "Nature as Aesthetic Norm" calls it "a half-personified power."² Collingwood has the following to say:

The naturalistic philosophy of the Renaissance regarded nature as something divine and self-creative; the active and passive sides of this one self-creative being they distinguished by distinguishing natura naturata or the complex of natural changes and processes, from natura naturans, or the immanent force which animates and directs them.³

¹H. Siebek, "Über die Entstehung der Termini natura naturans und natura naturata," Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie, III (1890), 370.

²Arthur O. Lovejoy, Essays in the History of Ideas, 3rd ed. (New York, 1960), p. 72.

³R.G. Collingwood, The Idea of Nature (Oxford, 1964), p. 94. (This book was first published in 1945.)

In The Interlude of the four Elements (1510-20)¹ the "first cause of every thyng" (god) is "nature naturyng" (natura naturans) and the speaker is "his mynyster callyd nature naturate" who is responsible "for the preseruacyon/ Of every thyng in his kynde to endure."

Spinoza, who took the term from Thomism,² offers the following definition:

By natura naturans... is to be understood that which is in itself and is conceived through itself, or those attributes of substance which express eternal and infinite essence--that is to say, God in so far as he is considered as a free cause; but by natura naturata... I understand everything which follows from the necessity of the nature of God or of any one of God's attributes, that is to say, all the modes of God's attributes in so far as they are considered as things which are in God and which without God can neither exist nor be conceived.

As Roth sums it up:

Natura naturans is thus God apprehended as cause; natura naturata is God apprehended as effect.³

It is obvious that the varying usages of "natura naturans" tend to obscure rather than clarify. In the case of Spinoza the philosophical-causal emphasis takes the issue beyond the semantic field in which we are interested. This may be further pursued in a work which has closer links with our subject--John Ray's Wisdom of God.

Ray has been discussing Boyle's ideas on motion and agrees with him that "God Almighty did not only establish

¹The Tudor Facsimile Texts, ed. John S. Farmer (London, 1908). The pages are not numbered but the references are on the 8th page.

²M. Victor Delbos, Le Spinozisme (Paris, 1964), p. 55.

³Leon Roth, Spinoza (London, 1929), pp. 77-78.

Laws and Rules of local Motion among the Parts of the universal Matter, but did, and does also himself, execute them, or move the Parts of Matter, according to them..." (p. 52). He disagrees only about the moving agent which, for Boyle, is God and, for Ray, a Plastic Nature. He refers to Cudworth, the Cambridge Platonist, for his supporting arguments and quotes a long passage from him. We will turn to the original--Ralph Cudworth, The True Intellectual System of the Universe... (London, 1678).

Cudworth has been discussing the creation, in particular the wonderful design of the bodies of animals and the problem of motion. He asks how all came to be, and offers two possible explanations. It was either created by chance or by God's own hands. The first idea is dismissed as "Irrational, Impious, Atheistical" and he objects to the second. It is not "Decorous" that God should "set his own Hand, as it were, to every Work, and immediately do all the Meanest and Triflingest things himself Drudgingly, without making use of any Inferior and Subordinate Instruments" (p. 149). The following passage is in italics in the text:

But it seems far more August, and becoming of the Divine Majesty, that a certain Power and Vertue, derived from him, and passing through the Universe, should move the Sun and Moon, and be the Immediate Cause of those lower things done here upon Earth.
(p. 150)

Another objection to the view that God does all the work himself are the

Errors and Bungles which are committed, when the Matter is Inept and Contumacious; which argue the

Agent not to be Irresistible, and that Nature is such a thing, as is not altogether incapable (as well as Humane Art) of being sometimes frustrated and disappointed, by the Indisposition of Matter.

Therefore, he concluded that

there is a Plastick Nature under him [God] , which as an Inferior and Subordinate Instrument, doth Drudgingly Execute that Part of his Providence, which consists in the Regular and Orderly Motion of Matter....

(p. 150)

If we remember the theological background outlined in an earlier chapter, we will be aware of certain inconsistencies. Ray was against Descartes since his theories turned God into an "Idle Spectator," yet here, by supporting the idea of a Plastic Nature, Ray is in danger of doing just this. Besides, one of the arguments for supporting this view is the Aristotelian idea of nature's "Errors and Bungles"--a strange thing to accept when he himself has spent most of his life on botanical research in order to reveal the perfection of creation. Brockes is also inconsistent when he writes about Nature and the spirit of nature in this way. Ray, as we have seen, has imported the foreign idea from the Cambridge Platonists, and it seems likely that this is also the explanation of Brockes' inconsistency.

We can learn still more about Ray's idea of Plastic Nature. It is associated with his theory of motion--"an intelligent Being seems to me requisite to execute the Laws of Motion..." (p. 51). Matter being "senseless and stupid" is not capable of obeying the laws of motion:

Therefore there must, besides Matter and Law, be some Efficient, and that either a Quality, or Power,

inherent in the Matter itself, which is hard to conceive, or some external intelligent Agent, either God himself immediately, or some Plastick Nature.

(p. 51)

Such a solution is reminiscent of our previous discussion of the question of motion and the solutions which were presented. Plastic Nature is surely another deus ex machina solution.¹

Plastic Nature is also responsible for the growth of plants:

For that must preside over the whole Oeconomy of the Plant, and be one single Agent, which takes Care of the Bulk and Figure of the Whole and the Situation, Figure, Texture of all the Parts, Root, Stalk, Branches, Leaves, Flowers, Fruit, and all their Vessels and Juices. I therefore incline to Dr. Cudworth's Opinion, That God uses for these Effects the subordinate Ministry of some inferior Plastick Nature...

(pp. 53-54)

The relevance of all this to poetry will be obvious if we consider examples of poems by Brockes and by other poets of the same inspiration who use God and Nature interchangeably. Such poems generally seem to be concerned with some mysterious power or force which is felt to be working behind things. Brockes asks in his poem "Mißbrauch des Worts Natur":²

Wer lehrt die Thiere, sich zu nähren? Wer lehrt die
Vögel Nester machen?
Wer lehrt die kleinen Kinder saugen? Wer wirckt so
viel verborgne Sachen,
Auf Erden, in der Lufft, im Meer? Wer? Die Natur,
spricht jedermann...

James Thomson describes the workings of instinct in the animal world "by the great Father of the Spring inspired,"

¹Above, pp. 68, 84.

²VI, 282-286, Tübingen edition; Hamburg edition VI, 310.

and asks:

What is this mighty breath, ye curious, say,
That in a powerful language, felt not heard,
Instructs the fowls of heaven, and through their breast
These arts of love diffuses? What but God?
Inspiring God! who, boundless spirit all,
And unremitting energy, pervades,
Adjusts, sustains, and agitates the whole.¹

Ewald von Kleist writes:

Wer lehrt die Bürger der Zweige voll Kunst sich Nester
zu wölben,
Und sie für Vorwitz und Raub, voll süßen Kummers, zu
sichern?
Welch ein verborgener Hauch füllt ihre Herzen mit
Liebe?
Durch dich ist alles, was gut ist, unendlich wunderbar
Wesen,
Beherrscher und Vater der Welt!²

Another miracle which calls for Nature or God or some spiritual power as an explanation is the return of life to the dead earth in spring. (The reader will be reminded of archetypal associations.) Brockes asks what brings life back into the bare boughs. It is said to be the "Naturgeist" but he wonders what that is:

...Er muß eine rege Kraft, die ordentlich verfähret, seyn;
(Denn alles, was sie wirkt und formt, stimmt mit einander
überein
Und zielt auf einen weisen Zweck) wodurch die Gottheit
mittelbar
In dem, was er erschaffen, wirkt. Ist dieses dir nun
noch nicht klar;
So werden wir, nebst der Vernunft, erkennen und bekennen
müssen:
Daß wir, ein mehrers vom Naturgeist, nicht fassen können
und nicht wissen,
So denn ja wohl nicht zu bewundern, da sie von sich selbst
in der That
Nichts anders, als ein schwebend Meynen und dunkele
Begriffe, hat.
In diesem Dunklen brennt jedoch ein herrlich unaus-
löschlich Licht,

¹Spring, 848.

²Frühling (Zürich, 1751), p. 12.

Das, (da in allen Kreaturen, in den hervorgebrachten
Werken,
Ein' Ordnung überall zu sehn, und eine Weisheit zu
bemerken,
Nichts von sich selbst entstehen kann, auch nichts von
ungefähr geschicht,)
Den wahren Gott so deutlich zeigt, daß unsrer Sonnen
Glanz und Schein
Den körperlichen Blick und Augen nicht hell=, nicht
sichtbarer kann seyn,
Als unserm Geist sein göttlich Wesen. Ob aber, da itzt
alles grünet,
Die Gottheit sich nach mittler Kräfte, und in wie fern,
dazu bedienet?
Ob die Natur ein eigenes für sich bestehend Wesen sey?
Was dieß ihr Wesen eigentlich, wie fern sich ihre
Kräft' erstrecken?
Von diesen läßt sich nach dem Stande des Menschegeistes
nichts entdecken.
Laßt aber dennoch die Erkenntniß der Wissensschwäch' uns
nicht erschrecken.¹
Wir wissen hier, so viel wir sollen, und zwar nach unserm
Stande gnug,
Und klagen darum, daß wir hier nicht mehr erkennen,
nicht mit Fug.
Wir scheinen hier bloß zum Bewundern von Gott in diese
Welt gesetzt,
Und, im Geschöpf, uns sein zu freuen, wie daß man sich
denn nicht ergetzt!
Wobey man doch aus der Vernunft, auch aus der Bibel,
Gründe nimmt,
Es hab' uns Gott nach diesem Leben zu höh'rer Wissen-
schaft bestimmt.²

In Thomson's Spring the forces at work which bring
new life are "Nature's swift and secret-working hand,"
blooming, benevolent Nature (line 10), liberal, bountiful
Nature (lines 180, 229); it is Nature which paints the
spring with "matchless skill" (line 470) and "spreads/
Unbounded beauty to the roving eye" (line 505). The power
responsible for the growth of plant life in spring is
enthusiastically saluted:

¹The rest of this poem adds nothing to the present subject
but I should like to quote the whole thing since it contains
some of the most typical elements of Brockes' writing.

²"Ueberlegungen zur Frühlingszeit," IX, 315-317.

Hail, Source of Being! Universal Soul
Of heaven and earth, Essential Presence, hail!
To Thee I bend the knee; to Thee my thoughts
Continual climb; who, with a master-hand,
Hast the great whole into perfection touched.
By Thee the various vegetative tribes,
Wrapt in a filmy net, and clad with leaves,
Draw the live ether, and imbibe the dew.
By Thee disposed into congenial soils
Stands each attractive plant, and sucks and swells
The juicy tide--a twining mass of tubes.
At Thy command the vernal sun awakes
The torpid sap, detruded to the root
By wintry winds, that now in fluent dance
And lively fermentation, mounting, spreads
All this innumeros-coloured scene of things.
(Spring, 555-570)

This passage combines two aspects of the mysterious processes which suggest a hidden force behind the scenes-- "the infusive force of spring" and the power which causes growth. The first aspect is part of the idea behind the Seasons, the force reflecting God in the laws governing the changing seasons. This is enthusiastically celebrated in the conclusion of the work, the "Hymn to the Seasons."

These [the seasons] as they change, Almighty Father! these
Are but the varied God. The rolling year
Is full of Thee. Forth in the pleasing Spring
Thy beauty walks, Thy tenderness and love.

Mysterious round! what skill, what force divine,
Deep felt, in these appear!

Man marks Thee not,--marks not the mighty hand
That ever-busy wheels the silent spheres,
Works in the secret deep, shoots steaming thence
The fair profusion that o'erspreads the Spring,
Flings from the sun direct the flaming day,
Feeds every creature, hurls the tempest forth,
And, as on earth this grateful change revolves,
With transport touches all the springs of life.

Quite often, the word "Nature" is associated with the secret power which enables plants to flourish. It also includes scientific ideas such as the circulation of the sap and the provision for plant reproduction which are

felt to be miraculous. Brockes' poetry offers many examples. The wonder of plant seeds sends him into ecstasy. In his poem „Die göttlichen Wunder, in Vermehrung des Getraides..." (Metzler, pp. 158-173) he calls out in enthusiasm:

O ew'ger Ursprung aller Dinge!
Der alles, und auch mich, gemacht!

since he sees „absonderlich in des Getraides Samen,/Die Wirckung deiner Allmacht.." He continues:

O du Geheimniß=volles Wesen,
Du scheinst, vom Schöpfer selbst erlesen,
Zum Wunder=Werck, für jedermann!
Wohin sich auch mein Sinnen lencket,
Wie tief sich meine Seele sencket,
Je mehr sie hin und wieder dencket,
Was doch der Samen eigentlich:
Je mehr, je mehr verlier' ich mich.

The poem continues in this vein for several pages and ends with a hymn:

Du ewiger Gnaden allmächtiger Wille!
Unendlicher Ueberfluß ewiger Fülle!
Quell, Licht und Leben der Natur!
(p. 173)

These lines bring a new note into Brockes' poetry which was not present in the poems which we have discussed so far. It does not fit into the theological background of God the Creator whose creation reflects his "Weisheit, Lieb' und Macht."¹ Both attitudes find expression in the poem however as is true of other poems in which God seems to be more of a pervading spirit than the divine artisan.

The passages from the Seasons which have just been quoted also suggest an all-pervading spiritual power while the rest of Thomson's work reveals the same mixture of religious attitudes as we find in Brockes' Irdisches Ver-

¹Above, chapter III.

gnügen. I am not suggesting that Brockes was influenced by Thomson, since his most typical themes were already present in the earliest volumes of the Irdisches Vergnügen (from 1721) while Winter, the first part of the Seasons to be published, appeared in 1726. Both were obviously drawing on the same tradition. The background which we have studied and the works to which Professor McKillop has drawn attention in The Background of Thomson's Seasons show how easy it was for Brockes to produce his work independently. No doubt the later encounter with Thomson's Seasons reinforced what was already there. Apart from translating Thomson's work in 1745, he had already incorporated parts of it into individual poems in volume VII.

Since some of Brockes' poems, like the Seasons, express an awareness of a mysterious force at work in the processes of the external world and invoke a diffused "universal soul of heaven and earth," "allgemeine Seele des Himmels und der Erden," we might expect to find some information about common sources in studies on Thomson. Unfortunately, Thomson's religion is even more heterogeneous than that of Brockes, and it is an aspect which is relatively unimportant for Brockes that has received most attention in work on Thomson. This is the emphasis on harmony and benevolence and on moral and ethical issues which links him to Shaftesbury.¹ C.A. Moore² concentrates

¹William E. Alderman, "Shaftesbury and the Doctrine of Moral Sense in the Eighteenth Century," PMLA, XLVI (1931), 1087-1094.

²C.A. Moore, "Shaftesbury and the Ethical Poets in England, 1700-1760," PMLA, XXXI (1916), 264-325.

on these points mainly, but mentions briefly that Shaftesbury and Thomson have a similar kind of nature worship, noticeable in the hymns and apostrophes. McKillop¹ also makes a suggestion which could be profitably developed concerning Thomson's use of "the Longinian theory of the sublime applied to religious poetry by Watts, Blackmore, and Hill." Fairchild underlines the intricate structure of Thomson's religious and intellectual position just before the publication of Winter:

We may imagine that when Thomson went to London toward the end of February, 1725, his mind was a jumble of rather broad and rationalistic Presbyterianism--its sterner elements perhaps subconsciously rather than consciously repudiated; Newtonian science and Newtonian physico-theology; the closely related but more Neoplatonic, aesthetic, and benevolistic philosophy of Shaftesbury; the common-sense ethical religion of Locke and Addison.²

Brockes introduces into the hymnic passages of his poetry expressions for God which are quite different from his usual "Schöpfergott." For instance: "Brunnquell aller Herrlichkeit," "Urquell aller Dinge," "Unendliches, allgegenwärtiges Seyn," "undurchdringliches Licht, unendliches Ursprungsmeer erschaffener Herrlichkeiten," "unendlich ewigs All."

Some critics have found a mystical element in Brockes.³ Langen mentions the influence of Pietists like Arndt and Scriver: „Scriver hat im frühen 18. Jahrhundert auf B.H. Brockes' „Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott" gewirkt, und somit

¹McKillop, p. 7.

²Hoxie Neale Fairchild, Religious Trends in English Poetry, vol. I: 1700-1740 Protestantism and the Cult of Sentiment (New York, 1939), p. 514.

³Kupffer, p. 514.

ist für einen wichtigen Punkt der beschreibenden Landschaftsdichtung dieses Zeitraums pietistischer Einfluß bezeugt."¹ Scriver's "Gottholds zufällige Andächten" consists of emblems and is too otherworldly to interest Brockes seriously or to make a contribution to the development of poetry at this period. Similarly, Arndt is interested in this world as a stepping-stone to the next; Brockes, on the other hand, concentrates fully on this world and its God-given beauty.

Halle was a stronghold of Pietism when Brockes went there to study in 1700. Brandl (pp. 14-15) does not believe that Brockes was particularly enchanted by it: „Statt im Bethaus treffen wir ihn in Gesellschaft zahlreicher Landsleute bei Wein und Spiel..." In one of his poems he attacks the Pietists:

...daß man, sonder Grund, uns manche Wollust in der Welt,
Die uns erlaubt, ja gar geboten, mehr als unchristlich
vorenthält,
Wie sonderlich die Pietisten hierinn am allermeisten
fehlen,
Die, durch die Mischungen des Körpers und bittere
Melancholey
Verführet, allenthalben lehren, daß alle Lust verboten
sey,
Wodurch sie nicht nur sich und andre mit stetiger Be-
trübnis quälen;
Nein, noch dazu, so viel an ihnen, dem Schöpfer Güt und
Liebe stehlen,
Die doch sein wahres Wesen ist.
(Der Atheist, VI, 338, Tübingen)

¹August Langen, Der Wortschatz des deutschen Pietismus (Tübingen, 1954), p. 456. Langen again writes in „Deutsche Sprachgeschichte vom Barock bis zur Gegenwart," in Deutsche Philologie im Aufriss, ed. Wolfgang Stammeler (Berlin, 1957), vol. I, p. 1051: „Brockes hat die Pietisten Arndt und Scriver gelesen, und auch auf anderen Wegen mag ihm vielleicht mystisches Gedankengut zugeflossen sein, das in einem kleinen aber wichtigen Teil seiner Gedichte einen Niederschlag gefunden hat."

Since Brockes was open to French influence, one could ask if Fénelon's quietism contributed anything to Brockes' new religious vocabulary. Fénelon belonged to the stream of ideas which were important for Brockes' scientific poems and his Traité de l'Existence et des Attributs de Dieu (1712) could almost be called a prose version of the poems. In the second part of the "Démonstration de l'existence de Dieu"¹ there are prayers of a kind likely to interest Brockes because of their hymnic apostrophes: "O vérité. O lumière, tous ne voient que par vous..."; "O seul être digne de ce nom qui est semblable à vous?" The tone is, however, different from that of Brockes' hymnic passages. This is probably due to Fénelon's concern in these writings for a personal and emotional relationship to God. His main desire is unity with God but, all too often, he is aware of the gulf and his inability to bridge it. The difference may also be attributed to Fénelon's introspection--he seeks to define himself in relation to God's infinity, eternity and unity. He sees himself as an "ombre de l'unité," "un amas et un tissu de pensées successives et imparfaites," "un milieu incompréhensible entre le néant et l'être" (pt. II, ch. v). Compared with God he is nothing: "Je me trouve devant vous comme si je n'étois pas; je m'abîme dans votre infini: loin de mesurer votre permanence par rapport à ma fluidité continuelle, je commence à me perdre de vue...."

¹Oeuvres spirituelles de François de la Mothe Fénelon (Paris, 1822), vol. I.

What we have to find is the source of the idea of an all-pervading spirit or soul of nature. Cudworth's Plastic Nature seemed to be quite close, but was perhaps not sufficiently all-pervading. Another Cambridge Platonist, Henry More, also believes in "a Spirit of Nature which is the Vicarious Power of God."¹ This spirit is also associated with the question of motion for it is

manifest, that there is a Principle in the World that does tug so stoutly and resolutely against the Mechanick Laws of Matter, and that forcibly resists or nulls one common Law of Nature

and presupposes "the same Immaterial Principle (call it the Spirit of Nature, or what you will) which is the Vicarious Power of God" (p. 46).

More's ideas, however, develop further and end as a kind of divinization of space. We can see him working out his ideas that

...this distant space cannot but be something, and yet not corporeal, because neither impenetrable nor tangible, it must of necessity be a substance incorporeal, necessarily and eternally existent of it self: which the clearer Idea of a Being absolutely perfect will more fully and punctually inform us to be the Self-subsisting God.

(Quoted Koyré, p. 137)

More uses the same argument as Descartes, but thinks that he has reached a different conclusion:

I, on the contrary, since I have so clearly proved that Space or internal place (locus) is really distinct from matter, conclude therefrom that it is a certain incorporeal subject or spirit, such as the Pythagoreans once asserted it to be. And so, through that same gate through which the Cartesians want to expel God from the world, I, on the contrary (and I am confident I shall succeed most happily) contend and strive to introduce Him back.²

¹ Antidote against Atheism in A Collection of Several Philosophical Writings of Dr. Henry More, 4th ed. (London, 1712), p. 44.

² Quoted Koyré, p. 147 from More's Enchiridium metaphysicum, c. VIII, 7; p. 69.

We see that More's divinization of space, like the arguments which we discussed in the theological background, is an attempt to keep God active within the universe from which the new science threatens to expel him.

More next considers about twenty titles of God and, with detailed explanations, shows how they are applicable to space. Space is divine but More does not go so far as to say that space is God:

That spiritual object, which we call space, is only a passing shadow, which represents for us, in the weak light of our intellect, the true and universal nature of the continuous divine presence, till we are able to perceive it directly with open eyes and at a nearer distance.¹

Some of these predicates which More applies to both God and space are found in Brockes' poems--Incomprehensible, Omnipresent, subsisting by itself, uncircumscribed. This, of course, proves nothing, since such terms are current in metaphysics. Perhaps the closest Brockes comes to More's divinization of space is the following:

Raum des unumschränkten Raums! Quell des Lebens und
des Lichts!
Aller Geister, aller Körper Urstand! Wesen aller
Wesen!
Herr und Seele der Natur!
(IX, 334)

This poem seems to be an isolated example and is written in a style foreign to Brockes and more like that of Shaftesbury.

More was a minor poet also.² His poems are mostly

¹E.A. Burtt, The Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Physical Science (London, 1932), p. 141 quotes this from More's Opera Omnia (London, 1675-9), vol. I, p. 171 ff.

²The Complete Poems of Dr. Henry More, ed. Alexander B. Grosart (Edinburgh, 1878).

philosophical and concerned with the same problems which he discusses in his prose works. Any connection between his poetry and Brockes' work therefore seems negligible at first.¹ If we patiently read through these long poems, however, especially "The argument of Democritus Platonissans, or the Infinitie of Worlds," we discover some interesting points. The poem, like many of the works which concern us, is in the form of a cosmic journey. The poet leaves the "clammie clod," steps from star to star and penetrates the mysteries of space, matter, motion and creation. "Whatever is, is Life and Energie/From God, who is th'Originall of all..." (p. 92, stanza 10).

The conception of God in this poem is particularly important. It is not Fénelon's God. God is omnipotent, "is every where/Unbounded, measureless, all Infinite..." (St. 47). Such attributes remind one of those of the Hebrew God, but in this context they have new associations which More discovered as his thought developed; he was the first to express them poetically. As we have already noted, More's space is full of divinity, the spirit of God or nature is everywhere. But this space is the space of infinite worlds which More feels as a new experience of God² so that he is "drunk with Divinitie."

¹Brockes wrote several poems on philosophical subjects but they are not only unimportant, but have no bearing on our subject.

²The metaphysical background of this revolution is given in detail in E.A. Burtt, *op.cit.*, and Koyré. The literary background is in Marjorie Nicolson's The Breaking of the Circle: Studies in the effect of the "new science" upon 17th Century Poetry (Columbia University Press, 1962). Of More she writes: "If he could not write as a poet, he felt as a poet, and felt something no poet before him had attempted to express" (p. 165).

This Infinite God, as Marjorie Nicolson points out, is a God of Plenitude.¹ She quotes the following illustration from the poem we are discussing:

Wherefore this precious sweet Etheréall dew
For ought we know, God each where did distill,
And thorough all that hollow Voidnesse threw,
And the wide gaping drought therewith did fill,
His endlesse overflowing goodnesse spill
In every place; which streight he did contrive
Int'infinite severall worlds, as his best skill
Did him direct and creatures could receive:
For matter infinite needs infinite worlds must give...

And that even infinite such worlds there be,
That inexhausted Good that God is hight,
A full sufficient reason is to me,
Who simple Goodnesse make the highest Deity.
(Stanzas 50-51)

What is also important for our study of Brockes' background is the way in which More reacts to infinity. As he is confronted with still new worlds "In th' endlesse hollow Heaven," (Stanza 59) they "amaze our dazzled sight." He is overwhelmed:

I'm brent
With eager rage, my heart for joy doth spring
And all my spirits move with pleasant trembeling.
(St. 5)

The experience is ecstatic:

So now my soul drunk with DIVINITIE,
And born away above her usuall bounds
With confidence concludes infinitie
Of Time, of Worlds, of firie flaming Rounds
Which sight in sober mood my spirits quite confounds.
(St. 72)

In the poems which Brockes has written about space and the heavenly bodies, his God is also an Infinite God,

¹Op.cit., pp. 162-163. Brockes' God is also the God of Plenitude. See above, p. 91 and also p. 17. "Unendlicher Ueberfluß ewiger Fülle!"

inconceivable without the reference to the vast expanded universe. Junker, who has made a special study of this subject in German poetry, Das Weltraumbild in der deutschen Lyrik von Opitz bis Klopstock,¹ assures us that Brockes was the first to introduce this attitude to space into German poetry.

When Brockes thinks of the vastness of space which is utterly inconceivable, he cannot do so without adjusting his picture of God. How infinitely greater must God be compared to the sun:

Edle Quelle güld'ner Klarheit,
Deine Grösse, Kraft und Pracht,
Zeigen uns die grosse Wahrheit,
Daß der GOTT, Der dich gemacht,
Unbeschreiblich schöner, grösser,
Unaussprechlich heit'rer, besser,
Unbegreiflich herrlicher,
Höher und gewaltiger.
(Die Sonne, stanza 64)

Brockes describes the solar system and beyond, still more worlds, "An des Himmels tiefer Ferne/Soviel Sonnen als wie Sterne," of which we only see a small number. Several stanzas are worth quoting since Brockes here achieves an enthusiasm, one could call it a sublimity, which is astonishing.

Wären wir so hoch erhoben,
Als die höchsten Sterne stehn,
Würden wir aufs neue, droben,
Eben solche Himmel sehn,
Eben solche tiefe Ferne,
Eben so viel' andre Sterne:
Ja dasselbe träfe man,
Wär' man auch bey denen, an.

Ohne Grentzen, Grund und Schrancken
Ist der Raum, durch Gottes Hand,
Ueber aller Welt Gedancken,
Unbegreiflich ausgespannt.

¹Christof Junker, Germanische Studien, Hft. 111 (Berlin, 1932).

Dieser unumschreckten Weiten,
Ewiger Unendlichkeiten
Wunder=vollen Abgrunds=Thal
Füllen Sterne, sonder Zahl.

Nicht nur droben sind die Gräfte
Dieses Raumes grentzen=los;
Seitwärts streckt sich auch der Lüfte
Unergründlich hohler Schooß.
Selbst die Gegen=Füßer sehen
Eben so viel Sterne stehen;
Also, wo man hin sich lenckt,
Ist der Himmel unumschränckt.
(stanzas 68-70)

Brockes' reaction to the immensity of the sun and
to the thoughts of divinity with which it inspires him is
overwhelming:

Aber dieses zu ergründen,
Fühl' ich den Verstand verschwinden;
In Betrachtung dieses Lichts,
Wird die Seele selbst zu nichts.

GOTT, ruft die entzückte Seele,
GOTT, Brunn aller Herrlichkeit,
Meines Wesens Andachts=Oele
Brennet vor Zufriedenheit.
Ich verspür', wie meine Sinnen,
Vor Vergnügen, fast zerrinnen;
Meines Geistes rege Kraft
Schmiltzt, vor Lust und Leidenschaft.
(stanzas 65-66)

Brockes visualizes the emotions which a departed
spirit would experience in the midst of millions of suns
and stars:

Wie würd' ihm, bey solcher Weite,
Wie würd' ihm, bey solchem Schein,
Solcher Lichter Gröss' und Breite,
Gluht und Glantz, zu Muthe seyn?
Würd' er nicht in Lieb' entbrennen?
Würd' er sonst was dencken können,
Als: O GOTT, es rühme Dich
Alles, alles ewiglich!
(stanza 72)

This motif of the cosmic journey is quite common
in the works of the Cambridge Platonists and of those who

are influenced by them.¹ The poems of John Norris are very Platonic in inspiration. In "The Elevation" his soul takes flight to "fields of light" where all is "one immense and overflowing light" and the bliss almost too much to bear. Ecstasy here is not the result of the new attitude to space and the cosmos but is due to his return to his "native home" and the "beautys of the face divine."² The motif is a common one.³ In "Seraphic Love" Norris visualizes how the "imprison'd soul" will escape after death and gaze upon God's "Beatifik Face to all Eternity."⁴

The kind of poetry which Norris writes seems too abstract to be important for Brockes. Love, solitude, courage, piety, happiness, friendship, melancholy, beauty and the "methodical ascent of the soul to God, by steps of meditation" are too far from Brockes' beloved earth. Norris

¹Marjorie Nicolson, The Breaking of the Circle, p. 192 mentions Cowley's "The Extasy" in which the poet on his cosmic journey reports: "Where I behold distinctly as I pass,/The hints of Galileo's glass./I touch at last the spangled sphere;/Here all th'extended sky/Is but one galaxy,/'Tis all so bright and gay,/and the joint eyes of night make up a perfect day." Cowley has not so much in common with Brockes as one would expect. He is interested in science and aware of "crowds of golden worlds on high." Like Brockes too, he does not neglect the small things in the world, "the grain of sand," but his emphasis on the world of order (Robert B. Hinman, Abraham Cowley's World of Order, Cambridge, Mass., 1960) differentiates him from Brockes.

²John Norris, A Collection of Miscellanies: Consisting of Poems, Essays, Discourses and Letters, Occasionally Written (London, 1687), p. 53.

³Henry Vaughan, "The Retreat"; later, Wordsworth's "Immortality Ode."

⁴Op.cit., pp. 22 ff. Brockes in "Die schnelle Veränderung" (Metzler, p. 359) deals with the same subject--the bliss of the soul when it is released from "Des dichten Leibes schweres Joch,/Des Cörpers finstrer Kercker...." The last idea is not typical of Brockes.

deals with some of the themes of the tradition which we have been following but all are steeped in Platonism. The "Divine Hymn on the Creation" tells how God, prompted by love, created a harmonious universe of which man was the epitome. God himself is boundless and incomprehensible; he is assisted in the act of creation by "a Plastick Spirit" and the result is perfection: "in Nature's book, were no Errata's found." The whole poem is, as Lovejoy points out, a pleasant, devout embroidery on the theme of Plato's Timaeus.¹

Brockes has written a few poems which incorporate Platonic passages similar to the work of John Norris. They are often combined with his more usual subjects. The poem "Der Wolcken= und Luft=Himmel" (Metzler, p. 148-157) describes the changing pictures of the clouds in the sky and ends with a prayer for an increased capacity for devotion and praise. This is not Brockes' usual "Schöpfergott":

O undurchdringliches, allgegenwärtig's Licht!
Der Du der Ewigkeit Unendlichkeit erfüllst,
Der Du Dich in Dir selbst, zu Unserm Heyl, verhüllest,
Aus welchem, als ein Stroh, der Dinge Wesen bricht,
Du ewig=selige Vollkommenheit und Liebe,
Vermehre doch in mir der Andacht reine Triebe!
Ach gib doch, daß, wenn ich des Himmels blaue Höhe,
In einem heitern Glantz, in reiner Klarheit, sehe,
Es stets, zu Deinem Ruhm, mit frohem Ernst, geschehe!

In the same poem he describes an ecstatic vision of the souls of the blessed feasting on God's eternal perfection.

Wenn ich demnach von der sapphirnen Höhe,
Wann sie entwölckt, die tiefe Klarheit sehe:
So fühl' ich mich, vor Freuden, kaum.
Mich deucht, ich seh', mit Augen, einen Raum,

¹Lovejoy, p. 87.

Wo Millionen Millionen
Verklärte Geisterchen und sel'ge Seelen wohnen,
Die all', in einem Meer von Licht und Wonne, schwimmen,
Die all', in reiner Gluth von heil'ger Andacht, glimmen,
Die all', an Gottes Huld, an seiner Wercke Pracht,
An seiner Weisheit, Lieb' und Macht,
An seiner Majestät und Herrlichkeit
Unendlicher Vollkommenheit,
Zu ihres grossen Schöpfers Ehren,
In sel'ger Lust, sich ewig nähren. . .

Another example of this combination of Platonism
with Brockes' own ideas concerning God's wisdom, love and
power in creation is seen in the conclusion of the poem
"Die, durch eine schöne Landschaft in der Luft, vermehrte
Schönheit einer irdischen Landschaft" (Metzler, pp. 143-147):

Grosses All! Unendlichs Wesen!
Der Natur Buch giebt mir hier,
Voller Wunder, Glantz und Zier,
Deine Herrlichkeit zu lesen.
Unsre Seelen wissen nicht,
Sich was schönere vorzubilden;
Aber ach, was muß Dein Licht
In den himmlischen Gefilden,
Ohne Schrancken, sonder Grentzen,
Wo es unverhüllet, glänzen!

Welch ein seel'ger Anmuth=Strahl,
Welche Vollenkommenheiten,
Süßigkeiten, Herrlichkeiten,
Sonder Ende, Maaß und Zahl,
Werden alle Himmel schmücken,
Und, mit ewigem Erquickern,
Seel'ge Geister dort entzücken!
Welch ein Abgrund voller Lust,
Welche Tiefen voller Wonne
Sind, o aller Sonnen SONNE
Denen, die Dich sehn, bewusst!
Welch ein Meer von heil'ger Gluth
Muß aus Deinem Throne quillen!
Welche sel'ge Liebes=Fluth
Muß der Himmel Himmel füllen!
Ach, wie muß so überschwenglich
Dort des Schöpfers eig'ner Schein,
Da schon das, was nur vergänglich,
So gar herrlich ist, doch seyn!
Lasst uns doch, in diesem Leben,
Seine Weisheit, Lieb' und Macht,
In der Creaturen Pracht,
Zu bewundern, uns bestreben!
Sind wir, bey den ird'schen Schätzen,
Ueber wenig treu gewesen:
Wird Er uns zu mehr erlesen,
Und dort über vieles setzen.

Another poet of this kind with whom Brockes has much in common is Thomas Traherne (1637-1674). We find in his work most of Brockes' themes together with the new attitude to space. The following passage is worth quoting because it expresses most of the ideas which would normally be scattered throughout his poems:

It [the world] not only represented His infinity which we thought impossible to be represented by a body, but his beauty also, His wisdom, goodness, power, life and glory. His righteousness, love and blessedness: all which as out of a plentiful treasury, may be taken and collected out of this world.

The words "treasury" and "treasure" are typical of Traherne. One of his most common themes is that God's creation is superior to the wealth and beauty of precious stones. The same thought is found in a few of Brockes' poems:¹

Nie haben Persische Tapeten so geschienen;
Es glänzt kein güld'nes Tuch, wenn Perlen und Rubinen
Auch gleich darauf gestickt, so herrlich und so schön.
(Metzler, p. 90)

The Traherne passage continues:

First, His infinity; for the dimensions of the world are unsearchable. An infinite wall is a poor thing to express His infinity. A narrow endless length is nothing: might be, and if it were, were unprofitable. But the world is round, and endlessly unsearchable every way. What astronomer, what mathematician, what philosopher did ever comprehend the measures of the world? The very Earth alone being round and globous, is illimited. It hath neither walls nor precipices, nor bounds, nor borders. A man may lose himself in the midst of nations and kingdoms. And yet it is but a centre compared to the universe. The distance of the sun, the altitude of the stars, the wideness of the heavens on every side passeth the reach of sight, and search of the understanding. And whether it be infinite or no, we cannot tell. The Eternity of God

¹Brockes in "Betrachtung einer sonderbar schönen Winterlandschaft" (IV, 415) writes of the beauty of the landscape: "Der Glantz, den König' oder Kaiser/An Kostbarkeiten zeigen können,/Sind nichts bei diesem Glantz zu rechnen, nicht zu nennen."

is so apparent in it, that the wisest of philosophers thought the world eternal. We come into it, leave it, as if it had neither beginning nor ending. Concerning its beauty I need say nothing. No man can turn unto it but must be ravished with its appearance. Only thus much, since these things are so beautiful, how much more beautiful is the author of them? ... His wisdom is expressed in manifesting His infinity in such a commodious manner. He hath made a penetrable body in which we may stand, to wit the air, and see the Heavens and the regions of the Earth, at wonderful distances. His goodness is manifest in making that beauty so delightful, and its varieties so profitable. The air to breathe in, the sea for moisture, the earth for fertility, the heavens for influences, the Sun for productions, the stars and trees wherewith it is adorned for innumerable uses. Again His goodness is seen, in the end to which He guideth all this profitableness, in making it serviceable to supply our wants, and delight our senses: to enflame us with His love, and make us amiable before Him, and delighters in His blessedness. God having not only shewed us His simple infinity in an endless wall, but in such an illustrious manner, by an infinite variety, that He hath drowned our understanding in a multitude of wonders: transported us with delights and enriched us with innumerable diversities of joys and pleasures. The very greatness of our felicity convinceth us that there is a God.¹

In this passage the points to note are (1) the close relationship between God's infinity and the infinity of the universe; (2) the mixture of beauty and utility which is also linked to the next point; (3) God's goodness in the variety of creation (theme of plenitude); (4) the beauty of the world is associated with joy and pleasure.²

¹Thomas Traherne, Centuries of Meditations, ed. Bertram Dobell (London, 1927), p. 91 ff.

²All of these points are found in Brockes' poetry. Traherne, like Brockes, tells us "that the world serves you in this fathomless manner, exhibiting the Deity, and ministering to your blessedness, ought daily to transport you with a blessed vision, into ravishments and ecstasies" (p. 95). The world is to be enjoyed (pp. 195, 138, 145); "...the WORLD is unknown, till the Value and Glory of it is seen; till the Beauty and Serviceableness of its parts is considered. When you enter into it, it is an illimited field of Variety and Beauty; where you may lose yourself in the multitude of Wonders and Delights" (No. 18).

This last point, as we know, is the idea which inspires the Irdisches Vergnügen; the vocabulary reminds us of Brockes: ravish, delight, transport, pleasure, joy, "enflame us with His love," "in Lieb entbrennen" (Die Sonne). Like Brockes, Traherne looks upon the enjoyment of the beauty of the world as living "the life of God" (p. 161). "Every spire of grass is the work of His hand" (p. 197) and "we are lost in abysses, we now are absorpt in wonders, and swallowed up of demonstrations Beasts, fowls, and fishes teaching and evidencing the glory of their Creator" (p. 94); these could be Brockes' own words. Brockes could ask with Traherne, "Are not praises the very end for which the world was created?" (p. 221) Brockes writes:

Kommt, schmecket und sehet,
Wie freundlich der Herr!

Traherne:

My Palat is a Touch-stone fit
To taste how Good Thou art;
My other Members second ^{it},
Thy Praises to impart...

Traherne makes good use of the cosmic journey motif since he is fascinated by space,

All the Glory, Light, and Space,
The Joy and blest Variety
That doth adorn the Godhead's Dwelling-place....

He will "see the King/Of Glory face to face" (The Vision, pp. 16-18). Space is full of soul and life:

No empty Space; it is all full of Sight,
All Soul and Life, an Ey most bright,
All Light and Lov...
(Felicity, p. 22)

¹Traherne's Poems of Felicity, ed. H.I. Bell (Oxford, 1910), p. 97.

Many of his poems (Sight, pp. 108-110) express his thirst for the infinite:

We first by Nature all things boundless see;
Feel all illimited; and know
No Terms or Periods: But go on
Throughout the Endless Throne
Of God, to view His wide Eternity...
(The City, pp. 121-124)

One world is not enough, Traherne seeks infinity:

Each one of all those Worlds must be
Enricht with infinit Variety
And Worth; or 'twill not do.
(Insatiableness, pp. 124-126)

It is true that Traherne's style is different from that of Brockes (perhaps because Traherne is more of a mystic), but many feelings which inspire them are surely very similar. Both have the enthusiastic sense of infinity on the one hand, and of the immediate beauty of the world on the other hand.

For Traherne the beauty of the earth is a treasure surpassing all worldly wealth:

For so when first I in the Summer-fields
Saw golden Corn
The Earth adorn,
(This day that Sight its Pleasure yields)
No Rubies could more take mine Ey;
.....
So lovly did the distant Green
That fring'd the field
Appear, and yield
Such pleasant Prospects to be seen
From neighb'ring Hills; no precious Stone,
Or Crown, or Royal Throne,
Which do bedeck the Richest Indian Lord,
Could such Delight afford.
(The World, pp. 25-28)

This can be compared to Brockes:

Vor unsrer Felder Schmuck erröthen
Selbst Babylonische Tapeten,
Die eine kluge Nadel stickt.
Ein grüner Sammt mit Gold verbrämet,

Mit Perlen und Rubin besämet,
Wird, durch den Glantz, der uns're Wiesen schmückt,
Wie Glas durch Diamant, beschämet.
(Metzler, p. 14)

It has not been possible to determine whether Brockes had read Norris and Traherne. What I have shown is that some of Brockes' hymnic passages and themes come from a different background from the one with which we have previously identified him. The more Platonic and mystical tone is represented by Norris and the more enthusiastic concern with this world and with space is seen in the work of Traherne. Even if Brockes had no access to the works of these poets, he could have absorbed what they have to offer by means of secondary sources.

I am also suggesting that Brockes derived his feeling for infinity and the infinite God from the Cambridge Platonists. He obtained the more scientific facts about the universe from the scientists and those who used the work of the scientists. Derham's Astro-Theology was a mine of information. Brockes' poems, especially the scientific ones, are full of facts of this kind. The poem "Die himmlische Schrift" which is composed of many different elements, including the new attitudes discussed in this chapter, provides the following information:

Ob gleich Huygenius, Cassin,
Horoccius und Wendelin,
La Hire, nebst Flamstedius,
Auch Newton und Ricciolus
Von unsrer Sonnen Grösse schreiben,
Sie sey entsetzlich, und die Zahl,
Wodurch dieß helle Licht=Gefässe
An Grösse dieser Erden Grösse
Noch überträf', auf viel viel hundert tausend treiben;
So wollen wir jedoch das allerkleinste setzen,
Und sie auf hundert tausend mahl
Nur grösser, als die Erde, schätzen.
(Metzler, p. 117)

The difference between this view of the sun and that expressed in the stanzas from "Die Sonne" which were quoted earlier is considerable. The first view conveys knowledge about the sun and the second an experience of the sun as a religious encounter almost. Such an experience seems to result from the union of Platonism and the realization of the infinite universe. In fact, those who contributed most to the conception of the infinite universe owed a lot to the tradition stemming from Plato and Pythagoras.¹

Shaftesbury deserves a place in the present discussion because of his relationship to the Cambridge Platonists and Brockes' use of his apostrophe to Nature from The Moralists. The Moralists, a Philosophical Rhapsody...(1709)² is a discussion between Theocles (Shaftesbury), Philocles and a few minor characters reported to a friend called Palemon. Philocles is converted in the course of these discussions to Theocles' views about the existence of God. This has been achieved more by Theocles' imaginative apostrophes to natural phenomena than by intellectual arguments. His inspiration for these almost poetic passages depended on a natural setting, the view of a plain from a hill at sunrise. This, he hopes, will "inspire us with a truer song of Nature, teach us some celestial hymn, and make us feel divinity present in these solemn places of retreat."

¹This emerges from Koyré's book.

²Characteristics, vol. II, pp. 97-99.

This section of the Moralists (pp. 97-124) fits into the background which we have been tracing. Shaftesbury's God is, of course, closer to the God of the Cambridge Platonists than to the God of the scientists and the physico-theologists. Both groups were interested in the revelation of God in creation but Shaftesbury dispenses with didactic demonstration and relies on enthusiasm:

All Nature's wonders serve to excite and perfect this idea of their author. 'Tis here he suffers us to see, and even converse with him in a manner suitable to our frailty. How glorious is it to contemplate him in this noblest of his works apparent to us, the system of the bigger world!
(p. 112)

The first meditation is an apostrophe to the setting--"Ye fields and woods...." It is considered to be the ideal place for meditation on the cause of things and for the contemplation of nature. Nature is next apostrophized--"O glorious nature! supremely fair and sovereignly good! all-loving and all-lovely, all-divine!" Her works are superior to those of man. It all sounds like a hymn to Nature, the supreme Deity until she is addressed, a few lines later, as "wise substitute of Providence! impowered creatress!" She is therefore the goddess of Nature, whom we discussed earlier, an intermediate being between God and the world. The hymn to Nature glides almost imperceptibly into a hymn to God with the lines: "Or thou empowering deity, supreme creator! Thee I invoke and thee alone adore." Theocles celebrates Nature but recognizes that God is the source: "...I sing of Nature's order in created beings, and celebrate the beauties which resolve

in thee, the source and principle of all beauty and perfection."

Brockes versified the whole passage although he disapproved of the tendency to make two separate beings of God and Nature.¹ Shaftesbury was rejected as a deist or even as an atheist by more orthodox contemporaries.² It is interesting to note that Brockes modifies Shaftesbury's "all-divine" as applied to Nature to "selbst göttlich, da, in ihr, der Gottheit Wesen Selbst zu sehn."

The being invoked by Theocles is the all-pervading deity of the Cambridge Platonists, the God of infinite space:

Thy being is boundless, unsearchable, impenetrable. In thy immensity all thought is lost, fancy gives over its flight, and wearied imagination spends itself in vain, finding no coast nor limit of this ocean, nor, in the widest tract through which it soars, one point yet nearer the circumference than the first centre whence it parted.

This is not the mystical God within who, in moments of ecstasy, can be identified with the self, but a God to whom one must soar "into the wide expanse." The depths and "abyss of Deity" cannot be sounded. Man being "intelligent and rational" can attempt "to tread the labyrinth of wide Nature and endeavour to trace" God in his works. In this quest Theocles asks for guidance.

All these elements are already familiar except for the modified conception of God. The apostrophe and prayer for guidance were found in Virgil, Lucretius, the

¹Above, p 146.

²R.L. Brett, The Third Earl of Shaftesbury: a Study in eighteenth-century literary Theory (London, 1951).

hexaemera and the biblical epic. They are elements in the poetry of Blackmore, Thomson and Brockes.

Theocles now takes Philocles on a tour of the universe. The sun is hailed as "Prodigious orb! bright source of vital heat, and spring of day!.... Mighty being! brightest image and representative of the Almighty!" Most of the works which we have mentioned so far also showed a preoccupation with the sun and its similarity to God, but we shall have to consider this question later in another context. Shaftesbury's treatment of the sun has the elements of other works on the subject. The scientific and the religious are blended into a kind of hymn to the sun. Shaftesbury wonders how it can maintain its supply of heat in spite of the continual loss of heat. The question of motion also enters:

But, O thou who art the author and modifier of
these various motions! O sovereign and sole mover,
by whose high art the rolling spheres are governed,
and these stupendous bodies of our world hold their
unrelenting courses!

He asks: "how hast thou animated these moving worlds? what spirit or soul infused?" This reflects the close connection which we have already noted between the problem of motion and of God.

The next meditation deals with those aspects of the natural world which were covered in Brockes' scientific poems--minerals, winds, sea, rain, springs, rivers and light. The main points are there, but the usual details are lacking; the questions of the loadstone and of the salt in the sea are not touched upon.

Theocles is about to go on to the subject of the creation of the world and of its end--a favourite literary

subject--but is restrained by Philocles who would rather stay on the humble earth. Instead, he ranges over the frigid and torrid zones, plants and deserts. Shaftesbury, like the others, finds something positive to say about hideous deserts.

Such subjects are the same as those treated by writers like Ray, Derham and Pluche. Shaftesbury is also interested in them as a means of reaching God. His God is of course different, and the use he makes of the material is different if we look at it more closely. The basic elements are the same--minerals, heavenly bodies, elements etc., but without the details. They are no longer used as proofs or demonstrations but as poetic prose in the language of enthusiasm. Theocles has not been able to convince Philocles by rational arguments and appeals to his imagination. It is quite natural that subjects from natural history should be chosen for this when we remember that John Reynolds and Dennis held such studies to be a stepping-stone to religion and hence a most suitable subject for poetry.

Theocles' speeches are considered to be "numbered prose" which Philocles compares to pastoral poetry:

For in the manner I was now wrought up, 'twas as agreeable to me to hear him, in this kind of passion, invoke his stars and elements, as to hear one of those amorous shepherds complaining to his flock, and making the woods and rocks resound the name of her whom he adored....

Moreover it is important for us to realize that, for the restrained Augustan period,¹ Theocles was considered to

¹For the background of this see George Williamson, "The Restoration Revolt Against Enthusiasm," Studies in Philology, XXX (1933), pp. 571-603.

be very daring, even on the verge of madness. This is why he has to ask his listener to pull him by the sleeve if he becomes too extravagant (p. 115). Shaftesbury is cautiously suggesting a new kind of poetry.

It is not difficult to show that Brockes, in some of his poems, is doing the same thing in verse as Shaftesbury is doing in prose. His scientific poems are discursive and more like the writings of Ray, Derham and others who were concerned with the demonstration of God from his works. But those poems which have been discussed in this chapter can be compared to Shaftesbury's poetic prose. It is not possible to pursue the comparison throughout entire poems since very few of them have any stylistic unity.

Brockes and Shaftesbury make use of the same stylistic devices. Shaftesbury asks: "But whither shall we trace the sources of the light?" and "How narrow then must it [the world] appear compared with the capacious system of its own sun?" "What seats shall we assign to that fierce element of fire, too active to be confined within the compass of the sun, and not excluded even the bowels of the heavy earth?" Such questions are often followed by brief answers, but the questions are rhetorical questions and the answers are not mere facts but statements used in order to produce enthusiasm.

Brockes' poem "Gottes Grösse in den Wassern" also uses questions and exclamations to arouse enthusiasm:

Wie wunderbarlich weit, wie unbegreiflich groß,
Wie unergründlich tief ist doch des Meeres Schooß!
Wie dunckel ist sein Schlund! Wie flüssig und wie dichte
Die rege Wasser=Welt! Wie schwer ist das Gewichte

Des Wasser=Cörpers doch! Was ist dem weiten Reich
Der ungemessnen Tief' an Weit' und Grösse gleich?
(Metzler, p. 675)

Shaftesbury (Theocles) is also enthusiastic about water:

How beautiful is the water among the inferior earthly works! Heavy, liquid, and transparent, without the springing vigour and expansive force of air, but not without activity. Stubborn and unyielding when compressed, but placidly avoiding force, and bending every way with ready fluency! Insinuating, it dissolves the lumpish earth, frees the entangled bodies, procures their intercourse, and summons to the field the keen terrestrial particles, whose happy strifes, soon ending in strict union, produce the various forms which we behold. How vast are the abysses of the sea, where this soft element is stored; and whence the sun and winds extracting, raise it into clouds! These, soon converted into rain, water the thirsty ground, and supply afresh the springs and rivers, the comfort of the neighbouring plains, and sweet refreshment of all animals.

(pp. 116-117)

Brockes and Shaftesbury make use of apostrophe.

Shaftesbury: "Ye fields and woods,-----Ye verdant plains...."

Brockes:

Ihr Sonnen, die ihr ohne Zahl,
Im unergründlichen unendlich=weiten Thal
Des hohlen Firmamentes stehet:
Ihr Welten, die ihr euch um diese Sonnen drehet,
Die voller Wärm' und Licht, voll Strahlen, Glantz und
Gluth;

Es soll von euch mein fast entzückter Muth
Ein Andacht=volles Lied, ein Ehrerbietig's Singen
Dem grossen All zum Opfer bringen.

(Metzler, p. 115)

This is part of their hymnic style. Some aspect of nature is first apostrophized: "Prodigious orb! bright source of vital heat...."--"Lebensquelle, Brunn der Strahlen,/Sonne göttlichs Schattenbild...." Then we are led to the praise of God--"But, O thou who art the author and modifier of these various motions..."--"Gott, Brunn aller Herrlichkeit."

Shaftesbury, like More and Traherne, has the feeling for the vastness of space which leads to the feeling of

divinity:

Besides the neighbouring planets (continued he, in his rapturous strain) what multitudes of fixed stars did we see sparkle not an hour ago in the clear night, which yet had hardly yielded to the day? How many others are discovered by the help of art? Yet how many remain still beyond the reach of our discovery! Crowded as they seem, their distance from each other is as unmeasurable by art as is the distance between them and us. Whence we are naturally taught the immensity of that being who, through these immense spaces, has disposed such an infinity of bodies, belonging each (as we may well presume) to systems as complete as our own world, since even the smallest spark of this bright galaxy may vie with this our sun, which shining now full out, gives us new life, exalts our spirits, and makes us feel divinity more present.

(pp. 112-113)

The passages which have already been quoted from Brockes' "Die Sonne" may be compared to this extract for the sense of infinite space. It is worth noting too that such thoughts remind man of God's immensity and, at the same time, make him aware of the presence of God. We remember that Theocles had deliberately chosen a natural setting so that he could find inspiration for his hymns and "feel divinity present." Shaftesbury's God in this section of The Moralists is "original soul, diffusive, vital in all, inspiriting the whole" yet, at the same time, "boundless, unsearchable, impenetrable" so that man cannot "sound the abyss of Deity." Brockes' God is also "allgegenwärtig" and "unerforschlich."

It is, I hope, clear that the attitude to God and Nature discussed in this chapter belongs to a different background from that of Ray and Derham and that it is more closely related to the ideas of the Cambridge Platonists than to any other stream of thought. Brockes' scientific

poems, except "Die Sonne," reflect the theology of the scientific background, while his poems on the cosmos represent the boundless infinite God. It would be useful to make a general rule of this observation and infer that Brockes' God is dependent on the particular background or the particular sources which the poet is using, but this is not the case. There are several poems in which the different views of God exist side by side. One poem from a group of "Neu=Jahrs=Gedichte" with the sub-title "Morgen=Gebet im Winter" (I, 489) is written in a very prosaic style about the trivialities of Brockes' bourgeois daily life and has a hymnic ending which is completely incongruous: "O undurchdringliches allgegenwärtigs Licht!/Unendlichs Ursprungs=Meer erschaffner Herrlichkeiten!" This suggests that Brockes uses his material arbitrarily.

Brockes seems to take subjects and motifs from various sources and construct poems from them. In his Irdisches Vergnügen we find these repeated from poem to poem in different combinations and in varying degrees of integration. Sometimes they sound like patchwork, sometimes they are successful as unified poems.

The following extract from "Die himmlische Schrift" reflects a God who harmonizes with the context:

Da ich anitzt die allertiefste Höhe,
Den unbegrentzten Raum des hohlen Himmels, sehe,
Die Weite sonder Ziel, die Gott allein erfüllet,
Wo Sein unendlich ewig Kleid,
Gewebt aus Licht und Dunkelheit,
Sein Wesen zeigt und verhüllet...
(Metzler, p. 115)

Another extract, this time from "Der gestirnte Himmel," a similar cosmic context, blends the motif of God's "un-

endlich ewig Kleid" with another picture of God as the Lord of Hosts.

Mich deucht, ob säh' mein Geist den unsichtbaren GOTT,
Der selbst der Ewigkeit Unendlichkeiten füllet,
Der Seraphinen HERRn, den Herrscher Zebaoth,
Als wär' Er in ein Kleid von Glantz und Licht gehüllet,
In ein unendlich Kleid, drauf, statt der Edelsteinen,
Viel tausend tausend Sonnen scheinen,
Statt Perl und Gold, viel Millionen Erden.
(Metzler, p. 114)

Such a combination of different conceptions of God in this passage and indeed throughout Brockes' whole work has tended to confuse those who have so far studied his poetry; some speak vaguely of Lutheranism, others of pantheism and other "isms". But Brockes' poetry does not fit into any definite category. I have identified two main strands but before this information can be interpreted, more evidence about Brockes' method of writing has to be collected.

CHAPTER VI

BROCKES AND THE SUBLIME

The new feeling for infinite space in association with God's attribute of infinity which we noted in the last chapter leads to the question of the sublime which is important for the study of Brockes. The aesthetics of the sublime as discussed by several scholars¹ ranges over such a wide field that Shaftesbury and Milton, whom one would consider to be completely different, according to certain criteria, are both considered sublime. Only those aspects which shed new light on Brockes' poetic activity need detain us.

Samuel Monk finds the roots of eighteenth-century attitudes to the sublime in the pseudo-Longinian treatise Peri Hupsous which was primarily concerned with questions of rhetoric. Monk, on his own admission, emphasizes a few aesthetic points "out of proportion to the space they occupy." In this he is justified, since they were to be taken up and re-interpreted by eighteenth-century writers. For instance, he is interested in passages from Longinus which suggest a relationship between the sublime and emotion. The sublime "not only persuades, but even throws an audience into transport..." (p. 12). One of the qualities of the sublime, "the Pathetic," is the "power of raising

¹Samuel Monk, The Sublime: a Study of Critical Theories in Eighteenth-Century England (New York, 1935). Marjorie Hope Nicolson, Mountain Gloom and Mountain Glory (New York, 1963). The Critical Works of John Dennis, ed. Edward Niles Hooker (Baltimore, 1939). R.L. Brett, The Third Earl of Shaftesbury: A Study in Eighteenth-Century Literary Theory (London, 1951).

the passions to a violent and even enthusiastic degree..." (p. 13). I should add to this other points which are of interest to our special study. Longinus notes the sublimity of the Mosaic account of the creation (p. 15). In addition, Monk summarizes some ideas from the treatise On the sublime (pp. 145-147). Longinus believes that man is endowed with a love of grandeur:

Hence it is, that the whole universe is not sufficient for the extensive reach and piercing speculation of the human understanding. It passes the bounds of the material world, and launches forth at pleasure into endless space.

Nature impels us to admire not a small river "that ministers to our necessities" but the Nile, the Ister, and the Rhine; likewise the sun and stars "surprise" us, and "Aetna in eruption commands our wonder." What we have to retain here is (1) the connection between the sublime and emotion and (2) the connection between the vast and emotion.

The sublime became very popular in England and France with Boileau's translation of On the Sublime in 1674. John Dennis was one of its most ardent exponents in England and his enthusiasm earned for him the nickname "Sir Tremendous Longinus." Several extracts from his essays, "The Advancement and Reformation of Modern Poetry" (1701) and "The Grounds of Criticism in Poetry" (1704), will help us to see how many of the elements which have already been discussed impinge upon the question of the sublime.¹

Dennis continually emphasizes that religious emotion produces the highest form of poetry. He writes in the Epistle

¹I am using Hooker's edition, vol. I, p. 198.

Dedicatory to the "Advancement and Reformation of Modern Poetry"--about the "Assertion which is the Foundation of the following Treatise; which is, That Religion gives a very great Advantage for the exciting of Passion in Poetry." Other subjects which produce emotion in poetry are the phenomena of the material world--sun, moon, stars, the immensity of the universe and the motions of heaven and earth; water, earth, air, fire, winds, seas, rivers and mountains; all the wonders of the universe which "shew the Attributes of the Creator, or relate to his Worship" (p. 350). Natural philosophy is also important, for "the more we know of Things that are never to be comprehended by us, the more that Knowledge must make them appear wonderful" (p. 350).

These subjects are very familiar in the background which we have been studying. It is now easy to see how all the scientific and theological threads tie up with the poetic and aesthetic. There are, of course, degrees of sublimity or enthusiasm and different "enthusiastic passions." Dennis distinguishes between vulgar and enthusiastic passion. The vulgar is the ordinary way of looking at things which sees the sun as "a round flat shining Body." To the mind "in Meditation" it is "a vast and glorious Body, and the top of all the visible Creation, and the brightest material Image of the Divinity." Thunder produces the ordinary idea of "a black Cloud, and a great Noise" but the mind in meditation

sets before us the most forcible, most resistless, and consequently the most dreadful Phaenomenon in

Nature: So that this Idea must move a great deal of Terror in us, and 'tis this sort of Terror that I call Enthusiasm. And 'tis this sort of Terror, or Admiration, or Horror, and so of the rest, which express'd in Poetry make that Spirit, that Passion, and that Fire, which so wonderfully please.
(pp.338-339)

Similarly, we have seen in Brockes' treatment of the sun varying degrees of emotion from the "vulgar" to the sublime.¹ The poems from the scientific background tended to be more objective and factual while those which fitted into the background of the Cambridge Platonists were more "enthusiastic." We shall see later that Brockes also exploits the kind of sublimity which Dennis associates with thunder, the sublimity of terror.

Another passage from Dennis adds a new element to the discussion of emotion in poetry:

I call that ordinary Passion whose cause is clearly comprehended by him who feels it, whether it be Admiration, Terror or Joy; and I call the very same Passions Enthusiasms, when their cause is not clearly comprehended by him who feels them.

Brockes' poetry is full of the mystery of the incomprehensible. The most typical expression of this kind of sublimity are Shaftesbury's words "in thy immensity all thought is lost...."

R.L.Brett says that Shaftesbury added to the idea of the sublime by connecting it with infinity and making it a more aesthetic conception. But before him More and Traherne were also carried away in their imagination by the idea of infinity and the infinite deity with which it was associated. Several examples have been given to show that Brockes was inspired by the same ideas and feelings. I should like to quote some more poems which reveal that Brockes can be called a poet of the sublime as far as his attitude to infinite space is concerned.

¹Above, p.176.

The passage is from the poem "Der Wolcken- und Luft=Himmel" (Metzler, pp. 148-157). It is the impression of immense endless spaces which is important here:

Es schwinget sich mein Geist in die sapphirne Höhe,
Ich eil' ins Firmament, ich fliege, wie ein Strahl,
Durchs Boden=lose Meer, durchs unumschränckte Thal
Des nie begriff'nen Raums, in dessen hohlen Gründen
Kein Ziel, kein Schluß, kein Grund zu finden.

Hier denck' ich an die Tief', hier denck' ich an die
Weite,
Die ungeheure Läng' und ungeheure Breite
Des Kreises, den allein der Sonnen Licht erfüllt,
Das unaufhörlich strahlt und unaufhörlich quillt
Aus einem Mittel=Punct von Millionen Meilen.

This is not an ordinary account of space but the expression of a tremendous feeling for and experience of immensity, written with enthusiasm. This experience is linked to an impression of an infinite God. The next lines are:

Hilf GOTT! was stellt sich mir,
Indem ich dieses denck', für eine Grösse für!
Kein menschlicher Verstand kann hier ein Ziel ereilen.
O unermeßlicher, o ungeheurer Raum,
Wer wird doch deine Gröss' und Tiefe fassen können,
Indem die gantze Welt, Luft, Meer und Erde, kaum,
Bey deinem Mittel=Punct, ein Mittel=Punct zu nennen.

The next example is from the poem "Gottes Grösse" (pp. 534-538)¹ which contains too many illustrations of

¹It is interesting to note that the feeling for the sublime in association with God and the infinite universe which is characteristic of Klopstock's odes is experienced in some circles quite early in the century in Germany. Christof Junker, Das Weltraumbild in der deutschen Lyrik von Opitz bis Klopstock (Berlin, 1932) discusses this and claims that Brockes is the first German poet to write about it. Brockes' "Gottes Grösse" was printed in Der Patriot 51 (21 Dec. 1724) and had apparently been circulating in manuscript form anonymously. It is also published anonymously in Der Patriot although the author claims to know who wrote it. It is published in Ird. Verg. vol. III in 1728. The article in Der Patriot prints another poem on this subject by an unnamed Viennese poet; the title is "Betrachtung des unendlichen Schöpfers bey Anschauung des gestirnten Himmels." Another article, probably by Brockes, Der Patriot 42 (Oct. 1724) discusses the infinite universe. The following passage is typical of many of Brockes' poems: "Es war mir unmöglich, bey diesem weitläufftigen prächtigen Schau=Platze der Natur, nicht zugleich auff dessen unendlichen Bau=Meister zu gedencken, der alle diese Dinge durch Seine Gegenwart füllet und erhält, und meine Gedancken verlohren sich gar bald in dem grund=losen Meere der Göttlichen Unermeßlichkeit."

God's relationship to space to be reproduced. Stanza 7 is particularly interesting as it provides a transition to the next point I wish to make concerning Brockes' use of the sublime:

Wenn ich aber endlich dencke,
Was der Süd= und Norder=Pol
Wohl für einen Raum verschrencke,
Und was dieser Abgrund wohl
Für ein Sternen=Heer bedecke;
So erstaun' ich, zitttr', erschrecke.
Mein so gar verschlung'ner Sinn
Weis nicht, ob und was ich bin.

It is the emotional reaction to vast spaces which is important here. A mixture of astonishment and fear is accompanied by something like a loss of identity. The poem "Das Firmament" consists of twenty lines which describe the experience of space. The poet exclaims, "Es schwindelte mein Aug', es stockte meine Seele" when he looks at the immense firmament.

Die ungeheure Gruft voll unsichtbaren Lichts,
Voll lichter Dunkelheit, ohn' Anfang, ohne Schrancken,
Verschlang so gar die Welt, begrub selbst die Gedancken;
Mein gantzes Wesen ward ein Staub, ein Punct, ein Nichts,
Und ich verlohr mich selbst. Dieß schlug mich plötzlich
nieder;
Verzweiflung drohete der gantz verwirrten Brust:
Allein, o heilsams Nichts! glückseliger Verlust!
Allgegenwärt'ger Gott, in Dir fand ich mich wieder.
(Metzler, p. 477)

Such passages in Brockes' poetry are not to be understood as a mystical experience of self-annihilation prior to identification with God but as the experience of the sublime as it comes to be crystallized by writers of the period. If we examine most of the examples from Brockes, we will note that this experience is linked with the effort of the reason or the imagination to comprehend the boundless. The last two examples suggest that, confronted with immensity, knowledge and thought are rendered useless. In "Die himmlische Schrift" Brockes has been trying to calculate the size of the earth compared to the size of the sun and calls out:

O GOtt! wo bin ich doch? wer bin ich? Ich verschwinde,
Indem ich nicht einmahl die Welt,
Nebst allem, was sie in sich hält,
Nur in Vergleich mit einer Sonne, finde.
(Metzler, p. 117)

The same theme is found in Shaftesbury:

Thy being is boundless, unsearchable, impenetrable.
In thy immensity all thought is lost, fancy gives
over its flight, and wearied imagination spends itself
in vain, finding no coast nor limit of this ocean...

The mind cannot in any way "sound the abyss of Deity."

Theocles (Shaftesbury) is "struck with the sense of this so narrow being and of the fulness of that immense one."

According to Brett, it is this aspect of the sublime which constitutes Shaftesbury's particular contribution to the question:

But in his description of the sublime in Nature, as something too big for the capacity of the imagination, Shaftesbury was laying the foundations for an inquiry which lasted throughout the century.
(p. 150)

The famous Spectator essays, "The Pleasures of the Imagination" which appeared a few years after Shaftesbury's Moralists take up this point:

Our Admiration, which is a very pleasing motion of the Mind, immediately rises at the Consideration of any Object that takes up a great deal of room in the Fancy, and, by consequence, will improve into the highest pitch of Astonishment and Devotion when we contemplate his Nature, that is neither circumscribed by Time nor Place, nor to be comprehended by the largest Capacity of a Created Being.
(Spectator 413)

A later Spectator (No. 420) confirms many of the points which we have already noted in connection with the sublime. It is a long passage but quite important. Addison has just been praising Livy's lively presentation of history, and continues:

¹Characteristics, vol. II, p. 98.

But among this Sett of Writers, there are none who more gratifie and enlarge the Imagination, than the Authors of the new Philosophy, whether we consider their Theories of the Earth or Heavens, the Discoveries they have made by Glasses, or any other of their Contemplations on Nature. We are not a little pleased to find every green Leaf swarm with Millions of Animals, that at their largest Growth are not visible to the naked Eye. There is something very engaging to the Fancy, as well as to our Reason, in the Treatises of Metals, Minerals, Plants, and Meteors. But when we survey the whole Earth at once, and the several Planets that lye within its Neighbourhood, we are filled with a pleasing Astonishment, to see so many Worlds hanging one above another, and sliding round their Axles in such an amazing Pomp and Solemnity. If, after this, we contemplate those wide Fields of Ether, that reach in height as far as from Saturn to the fixed Stars, and run abroad almost to an infinitude, our Imagination finds its Capacity filled with so immense a Prospect, and puts it self upon the Stretch to comprehend it. But if we yet rise higher, and consider the fixt Stars as so many vast Oceans of Flame, that are each of them attended with a different Sett of Planets, and still discover new Firmaments and new Lights, that are sunk farther in those unfathomable Depths of Ether, so as not to be seen by the strongest of our Telescopes, we are lost in such a Labarinth of Suns and Worlds, and confounded with the Immensity and Magnificence of Nature.

Nothing is more pleasant to the Fancy, than to enlarge it self, by Degrees, in its Contemplation of the various Proportions which its several Objects bear to each other, when it compares the Body of Man to the Bulk of the whole Earth, The Earth to the Circle it describes round the Sun, that Circle to the Sphere of the fixt Stars, the Sphere of the fixt Stars to the Circuit of the whole Creation, the whole Creation it self to the Infinite Space that is every where diffused about it...

The passage continues by considering the other end of the scale, the infinitely minute, then adds:

The Understanding, indeed, opens an infinite Space on every side of us, but the Imagination, after a few faint Efforts, is immediately at a stand, and finds her self swallowed up in the Immensity of the Void that surrounds it...

Let us relate this passage to the work which we have covered so far before we advance to new conclusions. The ground is of course familiar. Addison, like the other writers, responds emotionally to the subjects which we in the twentieth century find dull--treatises on metals, minerals, plants

and meteors. The discoveries of the scientists "gratify," the contemplation of the earth and the planets produces "a pleasing astonishment," and space overwhelms and confounds the imagination by its immensity and magnificence. Although Addison does not mention the word "sublime" here, this fits into that category.

Writers on the theory of the sublime suggest that vastness is essential. I should like to suggest that there is a place in the conception of the sublime for the infinitely small. If one accepts the "description of the sublime in nature, as something too big for the capacity of the imagination"¹ then surely the world of the infinitely small challenges the imagination in the same way. Addison in fact tells us that the imagination is "stopt in its operations, when it endeavours to take in any thing that is very great, or very little." He is thinking in particular, as the scientists before him, of the minute structure of the bodies of the smallest animals.

Brockes has the same emotional reaction to the infinitely small and the infinitely great as his poems on these subjects show. The poem "Das Grosse und Kleine" brings both together. Lcidas,² after considering the overwhelming nature of the world of space, examines with

¹Brett, above, p. 192.

²Brockes often describes the experience of the natural world from a third-person point of view using characters with pastoral names. They are not true pastoral characters but merely observers in a landscape.

his microscope the tiny body of a grub:

Hier stutzt' er abermahl, stund auf, gieng hin und
wieder,
Hub endlich wieder an:
Wer ist, der dieß begreifen kann?
Wer, der des Schöpfers Macht und Wunder=Werck ermisst?

He finds that God's greatness is revealed not only in the infinitely great but also in the infinitely small:

Die Himmel und ein Staub sind beyde Wunder=Wercke,
Und beyde zeigen sie des Schöpfers Lieb' und Stärcke.
(Metzler, p.246)

Writers of the period were interested in vast prospects and panoramas which they found sublime. In this sense too, Milton was considered sublime. Marjorie Nicolson attributes "his great scenes of cosmic perspective" to the influence of the telescope. She writes:

God from his heavenly throne, Satan from the lowest stair of the celestial ladder "look down with wonder to behold" the vastest panorama ever described by any English poet.¹

Addison's essay (Spectator 412) contributes some information on this subject. One of the sources of the pleasures of the imagination is the sight of what is great:

By Greatness, I do not only mean the Bulk of any single Object, but the Largeness of a whole View, considered as one entire Piece. Such are the Prospects of an open Champion Country, a vast uncultivated Desert, of huge Heaps of Mountains, high Rocks and Precipices, or a wide Expanse of Waters, where we are not struck with the Novelty or Beauty of the Sight, but with that rude kind of Magnificence which appears in many of these stupendous Works of Nature. Our Imagination loves to be filled with an Object, or to grasp at any thing that is too big for its Capacity. We are flung into a pleasing Astonishment at such unbounded Views, and feel a delightful Stilness and Amazement in the Soul at the Apprehension of them. . . .
Such wide and undetermined Prospects are as pleasing to the Fancy, as the Speculations of Eternity or Infinitude are to the Understanding.

¹Mountain Gloom, p.273.

Brockes has written quite a number of poems which fit into this category. His landscapes often start with a description of the flowers at his feet and extend over fields and woods to the horizon. There are several poems about the sky, clouds and the sea. In fact he often thinks of the one expanse in terms of the other so that it can be said that his sense of largeness is even greater than his present subject. For instance, a field of waving corn is described as the rolling waves of the sea; the clouds remind him of the sea or of mountains and scenes on earth. Even when he is dealing with a restricted subject such as "Der Garten" (Metzler, p. 88) the flowers remind him of the milky way and others are like white stars against the blue background of the sky.

In the light of this background it is easier to understand why Theocles in The Moralists should choose the frigid and torrid zones as a subject for one of his enthusiastic speeches. We also remember that this was a familiar subject in the works of those writers who attempted to prove the wisdom of God from creation. Lucretius had used the existence of useless deserts, the torrid and frigid zones as arguments that the world was imperfect and had not been created by a god. Much ingenuity was therefore employed to refute this and prove the contrary. Shaftesbury also adds an interesting new note.

The relevant passages are too long to quote in full. The vast desolation of the frigid zone is described and its dangers and hardships for man, who, by his superior

reason, is able to overcome them and "adore the great composer of these wondrous frames." The beginning consists, as usual, of a series of exclamations which appeal to the imagination rather than to reason:

How oblique and faintly looks the sun on yonder
climates, far removed from him! How tedious are the
winters there! How deep the horrors of the night, and
how uncomfortable even the light of day!
(p. 119)

Even the negative aspects of this vast inhospitable area, which the other writers conveniently overlooked, are emotively exploited. There is an element of horror in the "raging cold," "the wild beasts," and the "wasted field." This trend is more apparent in the next section on deserts:

All ghastly and hideous as they appear, they want not their peculiar beauties. The wildness pleases. We seem to live alone with Nature. We view her in her inmost recesses, and contemplate her with more delight in these original wilds than in the artificial labyrinths and feigned wildernesses of the palace. The objects of the place, the scaly serpents, the savage beasts, and poisonous insects, how terrible soever, or how contrary to human nature, are beauteous in themselves, and fit to raise our thoughts in admiration of that divine wisdom, so far superior to our short views.
(p. 122)

The new aesthetics of the "ghastly and hideous" is different from Addison's milder kind of sublime in the last Spectator passage. Its importance for the future development of poetry is obvious. Since this is also a feature of many of Brockes' poems, some time will have to be devoted to the background of such a revolutionary change in taste.¹

¹The change is not a sudden one. I do not believe in swinging pendulums.

Shaftesbury's scaly serpents and savage beasts remind us of Brockes:

Hölen, wo die Wölf' und Eulen,
Schlangen, Bären, Sturm und Wind
Brausen, zischen, schreyen, heulen;
Thäler, die stets dunckel sind,
Halb-verdorrrte selt'ne Fichten,
Ohne Laub und leer an Früchten,
Und ein Boden, dessen Schooß
Nichts trägt, als ein faules Moß.
(Die Berge, stanza 9)

It is something of a contradiction that those who are concerned with the reflection of God in his perfect creation should admit that such imperfections exist.

Shaftesbury adds the following explanation to his passage on deserts:

Unable to declare the use or service of all things in this universe, we are yet assured of the perfection of all, and of the justice of that economy to which all things are subservient, and in respect of which things seemingly deformed are amiable, disorder becomes regular, corruption wholesome, and poisons (such as these we have seen) prove healing and beneficial.
(p. 122)

Two contrasted elements are combined in the aesthetic principle propounded by Shaftesbury in his words: "All ghastly and hideous as they appear, they want not their peculiar beauties. The wildness pleases." The deserts are judged according to an aesthetic standard while the resulting emotion is irrational. It is these aspects of the question which will now be investigated.

Taste in the seventeenth century, generally speaking, favoured symmetry, proportion and the closed form. From this point of view the universe seemed imperfect to Thomas Burnet. But then he was faced with the problem of God's

role as Creator since God, by his nature, could not create anything which was imperfect. His work, The Sacred Theory of the Earth, explains this apparent enigma. The original creation was smooth, regular and uniform, like an egg. After the fall of man came the deluge when the shell of the world crashed in and caused the internal waters to burst out and destroy the world. When the water receded and the earth dried out, we were left with mountains, and subterraneous caverns, all "ruins of a broken world."

This theory explains the present ugliness of the world.

That hollow and broken Posture of Things under
Ground, all those Caves and Holes, and blind
Recesses, that are otherwise so unaccountable,
say but that they are a Ruin, and you have in one
Word explain'd them all.

(I, 171)

As for the "Channel of the Sea" it is so deformed and irregular, without order or design that one cannot "admire its Beauty or Elegancy." It is a

vast and prodigious Cavity that runs quite round the Globe, and reacheth, for ought we know, from Pole to Pole, and in many Places is unsearchably deep: When I present this great Gulf to my Imagination, emptied of all its Waters, naked and gaping at the Sun, stretching its Jaws from one End of the Earth to another, it appears to me the most ghastly thing in Nature.

(I, 173)

One can hardly imagine an outlook more alien to Brockes' view of the creation and yet, in several poems, we are introduced to Burnet's world. In the poem "Betrachtung der Meeres=Tiefe"¹ Brockes imagines that he is viewing the depths of the sea and describes his reaction

¹VII, 80-86; Tübingen, pp. 77-84.

of "Schauer" and "Grausen." Its lack of order causes him to exclaim:

Mein Gott! welch ein verworrenes Wesen, ohn'
Ordnung! rief ich alsobald.
Wie ist, von diesem Reich der Tieffe, doch die
Gestalt so ungestalt!
Gespaltner Höhlen dunckle Rachen, gebrochner
Berge blinde Klüfte,
Verworrene bodenlose Schlünde, mit ew'ger
Nacht erfüllte Gräfte,
Unordentliche Felsenklumpen! Von Kiesel= bald,
bald Marmorstein,
Ein wild zu Hauff gestürztter Schutt aus Stücken,
die bald groß, bald klein,
Ein dichter bald, bald luckrer Hauffen, ein'
ungeheure Klippen=Last,
Die von der Sonnen nie bestrahlet; ein tief= und
schlüpfriger Morast,
Ein harter Kieß, ein fetter Schlamm, voll
widerlicher Klebrichkeiten,
Bedecken und formiren theils die ausgenagten
schroffen Seiten
Der gähen aufgerißnen Hölen, in welchen öfters
eine Schaar
Beschuppter wilder Wasserwunder und Ungeheur zu
sehen war,
Die, mit entsetzlichem Getös, wenn sie auf ihre
Weise spielten,
Durch ihre Last, Gewalt und Stärcke, des Bodens
zähen Grund durchwühlten.

Brockes then imagines that his reader will explain such disorder in terms of Burnet's theory:

Hier, deucht mich, hör ich dich, mein Leser! mir
einen starcken Einwurf machen:
„Da ein so wild verworrenes Wesen, ohn alle Ordnung,
überall,
„Fast in dem grösten Theil der Welt, und den
daselbst vorhandnen Sachen,
„Daß man darob erschrickt, regiert; so scheints,
daß mehr durch einen Fall,
„Als durch ein weises Ueberlegen, der gröste Theil
der Welt entstanden,
„Da nichts, als Finsterniß und Schrecken, im grösten
Theil der Welt, vorhanden.

In the poem "Das Wasser" he imagines the sea without water as Burnet has done, and asks: "Würde man ohn' Angst und Grauen/Solchen Abgrund wohl beschauen?"

Welch' ein' ungeheure Breite,
Welch' entsetzlich schroffe Höh'n,
Welch' unendlich öde Weite
Würd' ein starres Auge sehn,
Wenn es grauend überliefe
Der verborgnen blinden Tiefe
Unermeßlich=holen Schlund,
Dessen Abgrund ohne Grund!

Dessen Himmel=hohe Seiten
Selber der Gedancken Kraft
Und die Sinnen überschreiten,
Deren Fuß im Grunde haft't,
Deren tief=geborst'ner Bäuche
Ungeheure Wasser=Schläuche,
Deren Stirnen aufwärts stehn,
Und bis ans Gestirne gehn.

Würde man nicht rufen müssen:
Wer hat doch der Abgrunds=Gruft
Weiten Rachen aufgerissen?
Wer formirte solche Kluft?
Welche starcke Finger haben
Solchen tiefen Pful gegraben?¹

This is Burnet's vision of a "wide bottomless pit,"
"vast hollowness," a "fathomless" cavity with gaping
"jaws." The shores and sides are broken and confused,
rugged and irregular, of uncertain dimensions and "raised
into banks and ramparts." There are caves under water,
and "hollow Passages into the Bowels of the Earth"
(I, 178). Burnet, like Brockes, asks

from what Causes, by what Force or Engines could
the Earth be torn in this prodigious manner?
Did they dig the Sea with Spades, and carry out
the Molds in Hand-baskets? Where are the Entrails
laid? and how did they cleave the Rocks asunder?
(I, 179)

When Burnet looks at the mountains he finds that
"There is nothing in Nature more shapeless and ill-figur'd
than an old Rock or a Mountain" (I, 195).

They have neither Form nor Beauty, nor Shape, nor
Order, no more than the Clouds in the Air. Then
how barren, how desolate, how naked are they? How
they stand neglected by Nature? Neither the Rains

¹"Das Wasser," Metzler, p. 386, stanzas 5, 6 and 7.

can soften them, nor the Dews from Heaven make them fruitful.

(I, 194)

How far this is again from Brockes' world! In his poem "Der Morgen" (Metzler, pp. 75-79) he describes "Die Höhen dieser Welt, der Berg' erhab'ne Gipfel,/Durchdrungen bald darauf Auroren Rosen=Reich...." He has written several poems about the beauty of clouds:

So zieren schön geformt= und schön gefärbte Däfte
Den Boden=losen Grund der gantz durchstrahlten Lüfte
Durch Gottes Huld, zu unsrer Lust allein,
Mit Farben, Bildungen, mit Klarheit, Glantz und Schein.

Burnet calls the mountains barren but several of Brockes' poems tell us how useful they are because of the vines and grain which grow there. Yet, in the poem "Die Berge" (Metzler, pp. 124-131) the peaks are "Oed' und grausam." He views "Den verworr'nen Zustand":

Recht wie ausgebrannte Steine,
Schutt und Kohlen, Asch' und Graus,
Siehet, nach dem Augen=Scheine,
Vieles bey den Bergen aus.

Brockes even uses Burnet's vocabulary when he calls the mountains heaps of stones, rocks and rubble.

All doubt which we might have had about Burnet's influence on Brockes' attitude to mountains in this seemingly negative picture is dispelled when we read:

Wann Burnet [italics mine] der Berge Höhen,
Als von der geborst'nen Welt
Rest und Zeichen, angesehen,
Und durch Fluth verursacht hält:
Sollt' ihr Schutt fast glaubend machen,
Daß vielleicht die Welt, mit Krachen,
Durch die Gluth, schon einst verheert,
Und, durch Brand sey umgekehrt.

(Stanza 13)

Other stanzas of the poem "Die Berge" have obviously been inspired by Burnet:

Wenn man jemand, dessen Augen
Niemahls ein Gebürg' gesehn,
Sollt' im Schlaf zu bringen taugen
Auf der Alpen rauhe Höh'n,
Und ihn dort erwachen lassen;
Würd' er nicht vor Furcht erblassen?
Glaubend, daß er nun nicht mehr
Lebend und auf Erden wär.

(Stanza 6)

Burnet writes:

But suppose a Man was carried asleep out of a plain
Country amongst the Alps, and left there upon the
Top of one of the highest Mountains, when he wak'd
and look'd about him, he wou'd think himself in an¹
enchanted Country, or carried into another World...

(I, 191)

Brockes writes:

Der abscheulich=tiefen Gründe
Unbelaubte Wüsteney
Die zerborst'ne Felsen=Schlünde,
Das entsetzliche Gebäu
Der ohn' Händ' erbauten Thürne,
Deren Eis=beharn'schte Stirne
Mit Wind, Luft und Wolcken ficht,
Und derselben Wüten bricht.

(Stanza 7)

Burnet:

To see on every Hand of him a Multitude of vast
Bodies thrown together in Confusion, as those
Mountains are; Rocks standing naked round about him;
and the hollow Valleys gaping under him; and at
his Feet, it may be, an Heap of frozen Snow in
the midst of Summer. He would hear the Thunder
come from below, and see black Clouds hanging
beneath him; upon such a Prospect it would not
be easy to him to persuade himself that he was
still upon the same Earth...

(I, 191-192)

One wonders why Brockes made use of material which
did not correspond to his own outlook. One answer could
be that he took themes for his poetry from all sources
which were available to him. Although there is sufficient
evidence to support this view, I should like to make

¹Bentley also uses this idea.

another suggestion. If we look more closely at the poem "Die Berge" (Metzler, pp. 124-131) several points are evident. In the same poem there is the conflict of opinions to which I have referred. The first half of the poem deals with Burnet's world with its barren mountains, and the second half with Brockes' world where the mountains are God's rich treasuries supplying man with food, clothing and minerals. Stanza 14 marks the transition:

Ob nun gleich der Berge Spitzen
Oed' und grausam anzusehn;
Sind sie doch, indem sie nützen,
Und in ihrer Grösse, schön.

These lines, of course, still maintain the contrast--the mountains are ugly but there is compensation in their utility and size. It is only the theme of utility which is developed in the remainder of the poem. On the other hand, the poem opens with the words:

Lasst uns Gott ein Opfer bringen,
Und, Sein' Allmacht zu erhöh'n,
Auch der Berge Bau besingen,
Die so ungeheuer schön,
Daß sie uns zugleich ergetzen,
Und auch in Erstaunen setzen.
Ihre Gröss' erregt uns Lust,
Ihre Gähe schreckt die Brust.

In the next stanza we are in Burnet's world of "Hölen, Bruch' und Ritzen... Spalten, Grüfte, Klippen, Klüfte."

The same mixture of disparate elements is found in another poem "Betrachtung des Blanckenburgischen Marmors, in einem Hirten=Gedichte" (Metzler, pp. 225-239). But here more information is given about the poet's reaction to the mountains:

Es hauchet Wiedrigkeit und Grauen,
An diesem Ort, fast jeder Vorwurf aus.
Es sehn zugleich die scheuch- und starren Blicke

Hier ungeheure Felsen=Stücke,
Bald fest und gantz, und bald zerbrochen und zerspalten:
Bald Abgründ', Hölen, Mooß und Graus.

But the horror and aversion are replaced a few lines later
by another reaction:

An manchem Orte sind der Berge rauhe Höh'n
Recht ungeheuer schön.
Die Grösse kann uns Lust und Schrecken
Zugleich erwecken.

The starting-point of this discussion, Shaftesbury's
"The wildness pleases" can explain why Brockes used Burnet's
view of the world. Brockes may not entirely agree about
the ugliness, but he is interested in the "Lust und
Schrecken." Shaftesbury and Brockes, when dealing with
vast deserts, used exclamations in order to elicit an
emotional reaction which was not the usual one caused by
beauty and harmony but a mixed reaction to what was hideous
and ghastly. In addition, they were interested in the up-
lifting of the spirit by a confrontation with vastness
which transcended their powers of imagination.

This will become clearer if we consider further
examples. After Theocles has rhapsodized about vast
deserts in The Moralists, he turns to the subject of
mountains:

But behold! through a vast tract of sky before us,
the mighty Atlas rears his lofty head covered with
snow above the clouds. Beneath the mountain's foot
the rocky country rises into hills, a proper basis
of the ponderous mass above, where huge embodied
rocks lie piled on one another, and seem to prop
the high arch of heaven... See! with what trembling
steps poor mankind tread the narrow brink of the deep
precipices, from whence with giddy horror they look
down, mistrusting even the ground which bears them,
whilst they hear the hollow sound of torrents
underneath, and see the ruin of the impending rock,
with falling trees which hang with their roots
upwards and seem to draw more ruin after them.
(pp. 122-123)

Man now begins to think of the changes in the earth's surface, of the world as a "noble ruin" and of its final decay (obviously a reference to Burnet's Theory of the Earth). The travellers reach "the ever green and lofty pines, the firs, and noble cedars, whose towering heads seem endless in the sky, the rest of the trees appearing only as shrubs beside them."

The Grand Tour, according to Marjorie Nicolson played a great part in the changing aesthetics of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries since it brought the new experience of the Alpine crossing with all its inexplicable emotions. One element in the attitude to mountains, as the above extract shows, is the horror caused by the physical danger. John Dennis recorded his experience:

In the mean time we walk'd upon the very brink,
in a literal sense, of Destruction; one Stumble,
and both Life and Carcass had been at once
destroy'd. The sense of all this produc'd
different motions in me, viz., a delightful
Horror, a terrible Joy, and at the same time,
that I was infinitely pleas'd, I trembled.¹

Prior to this Dennis had seen different kinds of scenery-- a "horrid prospect," a roaring torrent, a dreadful precipice, overhanging rock and fruitful valleys. These, together with the dangers of the journey produced "a terrible Joy."

The reason why Brockes treats Burnet's scenes "voller Furcht und Grauen" is probably because of the mixed emotions of "Lust und Schrecken" and "ein schreckliches Vergnügen" which he derives from them. It is also on account of the kind of reaction which Burnet, in

¹Quoted in Mountain Gloom, p. 277 from Dennis Works, ed. Hooker, vol. II, p. 380.

spite of his aesthetic judgment, admitted to in the following passage:

The greatest Objects of Nature are, methinks, the most pleasing to behold; and next to the great Concave of the Heavens, and those boundless Regions where the Stars inhabit, there is nothing that I look upon with more Pleasure than the wide Sea and the Mountains of the Earth. There is something august and stately in the Air of these things, that inspires the Mind with great Thoughts and Passions; we do naturally, upon such Occasions, think of God and his Greatness: And whatsoever hath but the Shadow and Appearance of INFINITE, as all Things have that are too big for our Comprehension, they fill and over-bear the Mind with their Excess, and cast it into a pleasing kind of Stupor and Admiration.
(I, 188-189)

Burnet is saying that what is great and boundless in the universe, the sky, sea and mountains, reminds us of God and infinity and this overwhelms our understanding and results in a pleasant emotion. His words "a pleasing kind of Stupor and Admiration" make his reaction to these things sound rather mild but the other passages which we have quoted reveal an element of horror. These ideas are similar to those of Shaftesbury and Addison. Brett, as we remember,¹ considered Shaftesbury to be the first in the field with these ideas of the sublime,² but Burnet wrote his New Theory of the Earth before Shaftesbury's Characteristics.

¹Above, p. 192.

²Shaftesbury avoided the word "sublime" except in discussions of style because of its misuse amongst his contemporaries. The word which he used instead, "enthusiasm," was even more dangerous, on account of its long association with religious fanaticism. In his Letter concerning Enthusiasm he justifies the word and uses it himself in our context to express "whatever is sublime in human passions." In fact, at the end of the rhapsodic section of the Moralists Theocles is said to have taken leave of the "sublime" which suggests that "sublime" and "enthusiasm" are synonyms. See also Mountain Gloom, p. 298.

The question of what is new under the sun is hard to answer. Marjorie Nicolson considers the attitude to "mountain glory" new, but mountains, although they have not always been considered beautiful, have always been, in a sense, associated with the sublime.¹ Conrad Gesner, and he was certainly not an isolated case,² had a similar attitude to mountains in the sixteenth century:

For how great the pleasure, how great, think you, are the joys of the spirit, touched as is fit it should be in wondering at the mighty mass of mountains while gazing upon their immensity and, as it were, in lifting one's head among the clouds. In some way or other the mind is overturned by their dizzying height and is caught up in contemplation of the Supreme Architect.³

Mixed feelings of horror and sublimity are also aroused by shady forests. In the Moralists Theocles is describing a journey in the mountains and the reactions of travellers to a vast wood:

And here a different horror seizes our sheltered travellers when they see the day diminished by the deep shades of the vast wood, which, closing thick above, spreads darkness and eternal night below. The faint and gloomy light looks horrid as the shade itself; and the profound stillness of these places imposes silence upon men, struck with the hoarse echoings of every sound within the spacious caverns of the wood. Here space

¹Maud Bodkin, Archetypal Patterns in Poetry (London, 1963), pp. 99 ff. In the earliest civilizations, mountains and high places have always been associated with the Gods. The Hebrew tradition most of all seems to have made the greatest contribution to the sublime: "Yet it seems to be rather the Hebrew than the Greek tradition that has made powerful in our literature that aspect of the mountain, storm-shadowed, which has been named 'the numinous'" (p. 102).

²Johann Arndt (1555-1621) also considered mountains to be the "Zierde der Erde" (above, p. 125).

³Conrad Gesner, On the Admiration of Mountains, the prefatory letter addressed to Jacob Avienus, Physician, in Gesner's pamphlet "On milk and Substance prepared from Milk," first published at Zürich in 1543. A description of Riven Mountain, commonly called Mount Pilatus... (San Francisco, 1937), p. 5.

astonishes; silence itself seems pregnant, whilst an unknown force works on the mind, and dubious objects move the wakeful sense. Mysterious voices are either heard or fancied, and various forms of deity seem to present themselves and appear more manifest in these sacred silvan scenes, such as of old gave rise to temples, and favoured the religion of the ancient world. Even we ourselves, who in plain characters may read divinity from so many bright parts of earth, choose rather these obscurer places to spell out that mysterious being, which to our weak eyes appears at best under a veil of cloud...

Brockes is much more of a poet of light than a poet of darkness. In such poems as treat the subject of darkness he generally introduces flashes of lightning or moonbeams to relieve it. The interplay of light and darkness intrigues him. In his poem "Der Wald" (Metzler, pp. 216-224) Brockes expresses some of these ideas, but it is not possible to say whether Shaftesbury's influence was direct or indirect. The expression and style are different but it is conceivable, especially since the motifs are not really typical of Brockes, that the English text suggested the ideas which Brockes developed in his own way. The mixture of contradictory feelings is quite marked. They pervade the wood itself in a way which is typical of Shaftesbury's nature scenes. The wood is the "Wohn=Platz dunckler Lieblichkeiten,/Schaudrigter Zufriedenheiten." Darkness fills the silent air and the entire forest and its intangible being indicate some mysterious force which acts on the body and the mind:

Der Schatten sichtbar's Nichts, in grünlicher Gestalt,
Erfüllt die stille Luft, bedeckt den gantzen Wald,
Und ihr unfühlbar's Wesen weis't,
In grüner Dämmerung, in ruhigem Vergnügen,
Ein Etwas zwischen Leib und Geist,
Das Leib und Geist zugleich besiegen,
Ergetzen und erquicken kann...

Brockes, like Shaftesbury, is talking about the "unknown force" pervading the wood which "works on the mind." The passage is remarkable.

The atmosphere of another section of Brockes' poem is also similar:

Des Ortes Alterthum zeugt Ehrfurcht, und die Schwärtze
Der grünen Dämmerung füllt, durch's Gesicht, das Hertze
Mit sanfter Sittsamkeit. Die nie gestör'te Stille
Der unbewegten Luft erregt in unsrer Brust
Bald eine süsse Furcht, bald eine bange Lust,
Bald eine sanfte Ruh', bald manche fremde Grille,
Die Frucht der Einsamkeit.

Although the word "Altherthum" refers to the age of the forest, it is allied to "the ancient world" through the religious associations of "sacred silvan scenes." These lines are a variation on "the profound stillness imposes silence upon man...." Brockes' "süsse Frucht," "bange Lust" and "sanfte Ruh'" echoes Shaftesbury's horror, astonishment and peace. Such feelings remind us of Brockes' reaction to infinite space:

Ja, wenn wir endlich gar bey dieser Gröss' und Länge
Noch vollends erst die ungezählte Menge,
Ja die Unendlichkeit
So ungeheurer Lichts= und Sonnen=Cörper schauen
Mit Augen unsrer Seel'; entsteht ein heiligs Grauen.
Im Haupt wird das Gehirn, das Hertz in unsrer Brust,
Von einer frohen Angst, von einer bangen Lust
Geklemmt, gedruckt, gepresst,
Indem der Gottheit Bild,
Wodurch der gantze Bau der grossen Welt erfüllt,
Sich nicht ohn' Ehrfurcht schauen lässt.
(Metzler, p. 118)

Another sublime subject favoured by Brockes is the sea.¹ Burnet and the other writers included the sea in the

¹Maurice Colleville, La Renaissance du Lyrisme dans la poésie allemande du XVIII^e siècle (Paris, [1936]), pp. 210 ff. discusses Brockes' attitude to the sea and to the mountains, but misses the important question of the sublime. He mentions other poets of the sea in German literature, notably Heinrich Heine and Wilhelm Müller but does not see how outstanding Brockes' earlier contribution to this subject was. Brockes describes the sea in all its states. Not only does he excel in description, but also as a poet of the sublime.

things in nature which move by their greatness. Addison wrote: "...of all Objects that I have ever seen, there is none which affects my Imagination so much as the Sea or Ocean" (Spectator 489). Brockes' poem "Das Wasser" (Metzler, pp. 386-412), which consists of 78 stanzas, deals with all aspects of the sea from the objectively scientific, physico-theological, to the sublime of vast expanses, the wilder sublime of Burnet and the sublime of dangerous nature in relentless storms.

The boundless sea challenges our imagination:

Wo der Augen Kräfte schwinden,
Fängt die Kraft des Denckens an:
Dennoch kann auch die nicht finden
Dieser ungemessnen Bahn
Ausgespannte ferne Schrancken.
Die ermüdeten Gedancken
Müssen selbst verwirrt gestehn:
Daß auch sie kein Ende sehn.
(Stanza 11)

But the greatness of the ocean is heightened if it is seen in a storm as Addison's famous lines remind us:

...when it is worked up in a Tempest, so that the Horizon on every Side is nothing but foaming Billows and floating Mountains, it is impossible to describe the agreeable Horrour that arises from such a Prospect. A troubled Ocean, to a Man who sails upon it, is, I think, the biggest Object that he can see in Motion, and consequently gives his imagination one of the highest Kinds of Pleasure that can arise from Greatness. I must confess, it is impossible for me to survey this World of fluid Matter, without thinking on the Hand that first poured it out, and made a proper Channel for its Reception. Such an Object naturally raises in my Thoughts the Idea of an Almighty Being, and convinces me of his Existence as much as a metaphysical Demonstration. The Imagination prompts the Understanding, and by the Greatness of the sensible Object, produces in it the Idea of a Being who is neither circumscribed by Time nor Space.¹

¹Spectator 489.

Brockes, on a ship during a storm, describes what he sees in the poem "Betrachtung wallender Wasser=Wogen": "Es wüthet, wühlt und wallt die Fluth." "Dann steigen graue Berg' allmählig in die Höh,/Mit weissem Schaum bedeckt, als wie mit Schnee" (Metzler, p. 427).

The storm described in "Das Wasser" is much fiercer and more destructive. In fact, it presents such a picture of God exacting retribution by destruction as cannot be harmonized with Brockes' view of God: "Bey so grossem Elend lerne,/Wie uns Gott bestrafen kann...."

Sublimity is the aim of this kind of poetry and can be further clarified with reference to the advice which the poet James Thomson gave to David Mallet when the latter was writing The Excursion:

My idea of your Poem is a description of the grand works Nature raised and animated by moral and sublime reflections; therefore before you quit this earth you ought to leave no great scene unvisited. Eruptions, earthquakes, the sea wrought into a horrible tempest, the abyss amidst whose amazing prospects, how pleasing must be that of a deep valley covered with all the tender profusion of Spring. Here if you could insert a sketch of the Deluge, what more affecting and noble? Sublimity must be the characteristic of your piece.¹

John Dennis, writing a few decades earlier, had included most of these subjects in his list of the things which raise the enthusiastic passions.² They feature in all the writings which have concerned us so far.

In the present context, Brockes exploits the emotions more. The fury of the storm is terrifying:

¹Miscellanies of the Philobiblon Society, IV (1857-58), no. 30. Monk, op.cit., p. 90. McKillop, p. 129.

²Above, p. 188.

Wenn sich die erzürnten Wellen,
Von der Luft gedrenget, schwellen;
Kehrt ihr ungestüher Grimm
Thäler, Berg' und Felsen um.

The raging floods sweep over the cornfields, tearing up forests, towns and villages. Brockes crowds as much horror into his picture as possible. People and animals are carried off, graves are torn open and the rotten bones and corpses are exposed.

In der Stadt sind Thor' und Wälle
Umgerissen, abgespühl't,
Thürne, Kirchen, Häuser, Ställe
Weg, die Gräber aufgewühlt,
Es versinken Leichen=Steine,
Halb vermoderte Gebeine
Treiben, als im Todten=Meer,
Recht entsetzlich hin und her.

Einer, der, was zu erreichen,
Die halb=todten Finger schloß,
Griff nach einer faulen Leichen,
Die den Augenblick zerfloß:
Must' er also trostlos sincken,
Und im Wust und Schlamm ertrincken;
Einer streckt die Hand empor:
Dort ragt noch ein Kopf hervor.

Brockes has also introduced a type of sentimentalism into this storm scene which is not typical of his work.

Hier sieht man, samt seiner Wiegen,
Einen zarten Säugling liegen,
Und mit wimmerndem Geschrey
Schiesst er, wie ein Pfeil, vorbei.

Hier wird ein Paar Ehe=Leute,
Das sich noch umfaßt und druckt,
Der erzürnten Fluht zur Beute,
Und vom Strudel eingeschluckt...

The latter incident sounds rather like the story of the two young lovers killed by lightning about whom Pope wrote a poem.¹ Thomson span it out into a maudlin tale in the Celadon and Amelia episode² in the Seasons and

¹James Sutherland, A Preface to Eighteenth Century Poetry (Oxford, 1948), pp. 74-5. McKillop, p. 71 ff.

²Summer, 1169 ff.

his version of it is said to have had some influence on German literature.¹ Similar episodes, concessions to the sentimental taste of the day, were included in the Seasons.² They were translated into German³ but have, of course, nothing to do with the sublime.

Brockes' poem "Das Feuer" (Metzler, pp. 484-530) consists of 138 stanzas. Most of it is scientific but there is a section which one might call imaginative. The subject is: "Schrecklich ist die Macht der Flammen," and Brockes describes it in all its fury:

Mit Gezisch, Gebrüll und Krachen
Oeffnen sich bald hier, bald dort,
Tiefe dunckel=rothe Rachen,
Voll Verheerung, Tod und Mord,
Und wann drey=gespitzte Zungen
Sich gefrässig umgeschwungen;
Speyen sie im heissem Hauch
Asche, Funcken, Dampf und Rauch.

The subject fires his imagination, the flames grow intenser and the very rocks cannot stand up to the attack:

Mit Erschüttern, Krachen, Knallen
Hör't man sie in Graus zerfallen.

The ground trembles, the sea boils:

Alles berstet und zerspringet,
Alles brüllet, beb't und kracht.

The darkness which covers the earth is relieved by "Rother Flammen Blitz und Licht."

¹Morton Collins Stewart, "Traces of Thomson's 'Seasons' in Klopstock's Earlier Works," JEGP, VI (1907), 395-411. Otto Ritter, "Thomson und Gessner," ASNS, CXL (1903), 170.

²The Cambridge History of English Literature, vol. X, Ch. V, p. 101.

³Morton Collins Stewart, "Barthold Heinrich Brockes' Rendering of Thomson's Seasons...", JEGP, X (1911), 20-41. C.H. Ibershoff, "A German Translation of Passages in Thomson's Seasons," MLN, XXVI (1911), 107-109. "Bodmer and Thomson's 'Seasons,'" MLN, XLI (1926), 29-32.

We seem to be in an apocalyptic world of fire and brimstone:

Wenn mit Prasseln, Knallen, Zischen,
Schwefel, brennend Pech und Hartz,
Fliessend Bley und Sand sich mischen,
Wann dieß Meer bald blau, bald schwartz,
Felsen, welche glühen, weltzet,
Selbst den Boden frisst und schmelztzet,
Sich in rothe Wellen bäumt,
Rauch und Funcken von sich schäumt.

Brockes is thinking of the time "Wenn die Welt, zur Straf' gereift,/In ein Flammen=Meer ersäuft."

The death of the world is a common subject and finds a place in poetry about the last judgment which is concerned with bringing man to repentance.¹ The background has been discussed in a book by Victor Harris, All Coherence Gone (Chicago, 1949). Those who are concerned about the end of the world generally believe in man's sin and corruption, which is closely connected with the idea of an imperfect and corrupt world. Godfrey Goodman's The Fall of Man (London, 1616), supports this view. Those who oppose it, like George Hakewell,² attempt to show the excellence of creation. Hakewell maintained that the world would not be destroyed since it was created for man and that its decay would imply a flaw in the Creator.

Once again, we see that Brockes takes a theme which belongs to a rival faith. It is, I suggest, the sublimity of the theme which attracts him and it is to

¹This type of poetry is discussed in chapter II of Amy Reed, The Background of Gray's Elegy (New York, 1924). Johann Arndt's prose work Vom wahren Christenthum also belongs to this context.

²An Apologie or Declaration of the Power and Providence of God in the Government of the World (Oxford, 1635). Marjorie Nicolson, Mountain Gloom, pp. 105 ff., discusses this controversy.

Burnet that he owes his inspiration. Burnet in his Theory of the Earth discusses the final conflagration when the whole face of the earth will be "reduc'd to Plainness and Equality; nay, which is more, melted and dissolv'd into a Sea of liquid Fire" (II, 114). Other prophets of the end of the world, he tells us, believe that only the flammable things will be destroyed and that the scorched walls of buildings will be left standing. But since the Bible suggests processes like melting and dissolving, Burnet concludes that "it must be reduc'd into a fluid Mass, in the Nature of a Chaos, as it was at first..." (II, 117).

The earth will be destroyed in several stages. The springs and rivers will be dried up and the underground channels, which are believed to connect the seas, will be evacuated. The quantity of water in the oceans will thus be diminished and the remainder of the water will be evaporated by means of fiery eruptions in several parts of the sea channel:

But there will still remain, in the midst of the Channel, a great Mass of troubled Liquors, like Dregs in the Bottom of the Vessel; which will not be drunk up, 'till the Earth be all on Fire, and Torrents of melted and sulphureous Matter flow from the Land, and mingle with this dead Sea.

(II, 110)

The mountains will next be attacked. Since they are hollow, they can be endangered by earthquakes or have their roots eaten away by fire or water:

For we suppose there will be innumerable subterraneous Fires smothering under Ground, before the general Fire breaks out; and these by corroding the Bowels of the Earth, will make it more hollow,

and more ruinous; and when the Earth is so far dissolv'd, that the Cavities within the Mountains are fill'd with Lakes of Fire, then the Mountains will sink, and fall into those boiling Cauldrons, which in Time will dissolve them, though they were as hard as Adamant.

(II, 111)

The next thing to "tear the Earth with great Violence" will be water, for "when Water falls into liquid Metals, it flies about with an incredible Impetuosity, and breaks or bears down every Thing that would stop its Motion and Expansion." This causes an explosion and "is one of the greatest Forces we know in Nature." Burnet thinks that the force with which volcanoes throw rocks and heavy bodies high into the air is due to "the sudden Rarefaction of Sea Waters, that fall into Pans or Receptacles of molten Ore and ardent Liquors, within the Cavities of the Mountain; and thereupon follow the Noises, Roarings, and Eruptions of those Places"(II, 112). Erupting volcanoes, then, will "contribute very much to the sinking of Mountains, the splitting of Rocks, and the bringing of all strong Holds of Nature under the Power of the general Fire" (II, 112). In the end, the mountains will no longer exist and the "exterior Region of the Earth" will be "dissolv'd, like Wax before the Sun: The Channel of the Sea fill'd with a Mass of fluid Fire, and the same Fire overflowing all the Globe, and covering the whole Earth, as the Deluge, or the first Abyss" (II, 129).

When Brockes visualizes the end of the world and sees the mountains fall and rocks and metals melt he is thinking of Burnet's account. "Gluht und Fluth im Kampf"

is Burnet's theory. The final picture of a flat regular globe is also Burnet's--"Kein Spuhren sind zu sehn/Von den ungeheuren Höhn."

Brockes is not copying Burnet word for word but all the elements of Burnet are there in a different order. The following stanza is composed of the account of the end of all living creatures, the fields and works of nature, towns and cities (Burnet, II, 125) and the idea that all will be "reduc'd to Plainness and Equality" (II, 114).

Alles fällt und fließt zusammen,
Alle Bilder der Natur
Sind im Klumpen rother Flammen
Bloß ein' eintzige Figur.
Nichts hat Umkreis und Gestalten
Unterschied und Maaß behalten:
Ein entsetzlichs feurigs Ein
Ist nunmehr allgemein.

The same is true of the other stanzas:

Wann in unterird'schen Klüften,
Die mit Schwefel angefüllt,
Auch in dunckel-rothen Lüften
Ein beständ'ger Donner brüllt,
Alles spaltet, stürztzt, zersplittert,
Bricht, zertrümmert, und erschüttert,
Wann der Himmel Strahlen schneit,
Und die Erde Flammen speyt.

Wenn das Meer nur Schwefel=Bäche,
Statt des Wassers, in sich zieht,
Wann die ungeheure Fläche,
Wie ein rothes Eisen, glüht,
Wann sich Flammen=Wellen thürmen,
Den verbrannten Strand bestürmen,
Der, wie felsicht gleich sein Fuß,
Doch wie Wachs zerschmeltzen muß.

Da denn, wann der Damm zerfliesset,
Der bisher die Gluht umschrenckt,
Sich das Feuer=Meer ergiesset,
Alle Welt bedeckt, ertränckt,
Ueberschwemmet, stürztzt, durchdringet,
Frisst, verzehret und verschlinget,
Alles schmelztzt, vereint, zerstöhr't,
Alles in sich selbst verkehrt.

There are baroque elements in such turbulence as there are in Burnet's original;¹ the perpetual motion reminds one of baroque art forms, Grimmelshausen's Simplizissimus, baroque paintings, architecture, sculpture where all is in turmoil and the eye and the imagination are swept along without the limitations imposed by the classic form. Now in the eighteenth century it joins the various streams of thought which we have been following, the taste for the boundless, the infinite, the cosmic and the mysterious divine powers working in nature, all of which lead directly to the great German writers and further to German romanticism. It is truly remarkable that Brockes has picked out all these germinal ideas and exploited them in his poetry.

¹Elisabeth Haller, Die barocken Stilmerkmale in der englischen, lateinischen und deutschen Fassung von Dr. Thomas Burnet's Theory of the Earth (Bern, 1940).

CHAPTER VII

BROCKES AND HIS SOURCES

So far, our discussion of Brockes' sources has been confined to those which had a formative influence on his poetry and enabled him to turn his back on traditional poetry. This is naturally more interesting and more important for the study of German literature and of Brockes' place in it but it is rather misleading in so far as it concentrates on the positive aspect of Brockes' work.

Brockes often used sources less successfully and with little discrimination. Many of these are not referred to by writers on Brockes, so one must assume that this is another gap to be filled. On the other hand, sometimes Brockes is said to have been influenced by works which could not possibly have influenced him. This chapter will deal with some of these issues.

Brockes translated Principes de philosophie, ou preuves naturelles de l'existence de Dieu et de l'immortalité de l'âme (Paris, 1716) by Charles-Claude Genest in volume III of the Irdisches Vergnügen¹ under the title Grundsätze der Welt=Weisheit des H. Abtes Genest. The original is versified Cartesianism for the most part and is mainly concerned with philosophical questions such as how body and soul are joined, whether the world arose

¹III, 3-547; Tübingen, pp. 2-523.

by chance or by design, and the problem of matter and motion. These subjects also entered into the other works which we have discussed, but here the emphasis is mainly philosophical, and abundant use is made of Descartes' arguments from his Discourse on Method. There are several other familiar subjects; cause and effect form a chain which can be followed to God, the first cause (p. 66); Genest prays for knowledge:

Fais que je puisse aller
Des connoissances naturelles,
A ces Veritez éternelles,
Qu'il T'a plu de nous réveler.
(p. 44)

But Genest is also aware that knowledge is limited and some of the more abstruse questions baffle him:

L'esprit se perd, nos efforts sont lassez,
Notre raison surprise et confondue ...
(p. 94)

The following passage has also some of the usual subjects, but the conception of an in-dwelling God is different:

Je TE sens en moi-même, ô Puissance infinie!
Par tout présente, agissante en tous lieux.
TOI, qui de la Terre & des Cieux
Animes les Beutez, & regles l'Harmonie.
TOI, par qui les flambeaux de la Nuit & du Jour,
Dans le Cercle des Temps, ont commence leur tour.
Esprit, qui dans le notre exprimes Ton Image,
Auteur de la Nature, instruits-nous de ses Loix;
Dévoile-nous ce grand Ouvrage,
Qu'a fait naître Ta seule voix.
(p. 44)

These ideas are not the unique property of Genest as our background study has shown. They are more eloquently expressed elsewhere in works which are closer to Brockes'

¹Tübingen edition, p. 42 "commencé."

own style and interests. Genest's intentions were felt to be similar to those of Brockes:

Die Uebersetzung füllt die ersten 576 Seiten des Ird.V.III und der Herausgeber J.G. Hamann bemerkt dazu (30.Sept.1728), daß Genest „fast gleichmässige Absichten in Verfertigung derselben gehabt, als der Herr Uebersetzer mit Seinen bisherigen zween Theilen des Irdischen Vergnügens in Gott".
(Brandl, p. 81, footnote 4)

If the poem "Das menschliche Wissen" is valid evidence--Ermatinger¹ thinks that it is--its "Cartesianism" is typical of Brockes' attitude to philosophy. It takes the form of a conversation between A and B. A asks a series of questions on the subjects which Brockes has treated in his scientific poems. What is light, fire, water, etc.? B. replies to each question, "Das weis ich nicht." A becomes rather impatient and asks, "Was weisst du dann?" B. replies, "Ich weis: Ich bin. Warum? ich dencke./Ich weis, daß GOTT die Erde lencke...../ER will sich hier von uns nicht fassen,/Und nur allein bewundern lassen" (Metzler, pp. 695-697).

This may not prove that Brockes was totally ignorant about philosophy but it is one of many examples of his negative attitude to knowledge. It is not only beyond our comprehension but a vain and presumptuous pursuit. Too many different opinions merely confuse Brockes and reveal the poverty of the human mind:

Das gantze menschliche Geschlecht
Kam mir bejammerns=werth, und recht
Erbarmungs=würdig für.

¹Emil Ermatinger, Deutsche Dichter 1700-1900 (Bonn, 1948), p. 59.

Wir scheinen nichts recht zu fassen,
Wir scheinen all' dem Irrthum überlassen,
Der uns beständig äfft,
Da, von den Meynungen, die gantz verschiedlich
scheinen,
Von welchen von der weisen Schaar,
Die Hälfte, daß sie wahr und klar;
Die and're, daß sie falsch und dunckel wären;
meynen,
Oft all', und dennoch keine wahr.
(Metzler, p. 603)

This knowledge of "Die Ungewißheit aller Sachen...",
"Daß unser Wissen nichts, als Stückwerck sey" has the
advantage of making us humble before God.¹

Further examples of Brockes' inability to understand philosophy are found in his efforts to versify fragments of Voltaire and Shaftesbury. Brandl writes:

Brockes gehörte zu den wenigen deutschen Aufklärern, welche mit dem „unwissenden Philosophen“ innerlich harmonierten...
(Brandl, p. 106)

Brockes, as Brandl's footnote points out, has translated a few fragments from Voltaire. One of these is "Gedanken über den freyen Willen: aus Mr. Voltaire übersetzt" (IX, 461 ff). It is an attempt to versify Voltaire's Deuxième Discours de la Liberté from the Discours sur l'homme. After page 462 Brockes leaves Voltaire completely, although he is meant to be translating him,

¹ Similar ideas about knowledge are expressed in the following poems: Vain striving for knowledge is dangerous. All want to be clever but we should recognize our nothingness and honour God (IX, 429). God has given us definite proofs of his existence and we must not go beyond that. Man was not made to know and to understand (IX, 444). "Wir wissen hier so viel wir sollen und zwar nach unserm Stand genug." God has destined us for higher knowledge after this life (IX, 317). Our knowledge is vain (IX, 344).

and discusses a medley of ideas on the question of free will. One reason for this, I suggest, is that, contrary to what Brandl believes, Brockes does not share Voltaire's ideas. For instance, after the point where Brockes changes the subject, Voltaire continues:

Pourquoi, si l'homme est libre, a-t-il tant de
faiblesse?
Que lui sert le flambeau de sa vaine sagesse?
Il le suit, il s'égare; & toujours combattu,
Il embrasse le crime en aimant la vertu.
Pourquoi ce roi du monde, & si libre, & si sage,
Subit-il si souvent un si dur esclavage?

The ideas presented here of man's weakness, error and servitude are indeed completely different from Brockes' optimistic view of man's goodness.

The next part of the poem is concerned with free will. The ideas are commonplaces. Brockes wonders whether we can avoid what we hate and attain what we recognize to be good. The will is composed of "Verstand," "Gedächtnis," and "Phantasie" which are inseparable, but we have free will--things are what we make them. When Brockes discusses "die Phantasie" he refers to Shaftesbury:

Doch kann hie von was recht besonders der große
Schafftsbury uns lehren,
Wenn er, zum Beyspiel, folgend's schreibt.
Nun fragt sichs, ob der Mensch im Stande, Vorstellungen
sich selbst zu machen,
Ob ihm nicht Gegenwürf' und Umständ' und Bilder
von verschiednen Sachen
Zu dieser Geistkraft nöthig seyn? und ob nach
deren Eigenschaft
Sich unsre Phantasey nicht richte? so daß sie mehr
und minder Kraft,
Nachdem die Gegenwürfe gut, wie oder schlecht sind,
selbst erlange,

¹Voltaire, Oeuvres Complètes (Paris, 1785), vol. XII, p. 18.

Sich Bilder deutlich zu formiren, und auch nach-
her, wenn der Verstand
Sie nach der Richtigkeit erwogen, die Seele, was
er gut erkannt,
Nach ihrem eigentlichen Wesen sodann zu haben
nicht verlange,
Und, was er schädlich hält, verwerfe?

Brockes supplies this footnote:

Die Unterredung mit sich selbst scheint, nach
dem Rath des Grafen von Shaftsbury, eine
beträchtliche und nothwendige Sache zu seyn.
Niemand wird das Amt eines Raths, eines Lehrers,
eines Freundes besser bey uns verwalten können,
als wir selbst.

To what extent Brockes' comments on Shaftesbury's
ideas show a profound knowledge of philosophy or of
Shaftesbury's works must now be considered. This poem is
often quoted as evidence.¹ Fritz von Manikowski, after
discussing several ideas which he thinks Brockes shares
with Shaftesbury, writes:

Diese Anklänge an Shaftesbury'sche Gedanken-
kreise werden wir nicht mehr besonders
auffällig finden, nachdem wir gesehen haben, daß
solche auch in den Gedanken von Gott und Welt
vorhanden waren, und wir andererseits durch ein
Selbstzeugnis unseres Dichters (Bd. 9 der ersten
Auflage des Irdischen V., S. 476 ff.) darüber im
klaren sind, daß Brockes selbst die Schriften
Shaftesburys, die in den Jahren 1708-1713
erschieden und zum Teil schon in den Jahren
1738-1745 ins Deutsche übertragen worden sind,
eifrig gelesen hat.²

¹Brandl, p. 48, footnote 2 and p. 103, footnote 4.
Lawrence Marsden Price, Die Aufnahme englischer
Literatur in Deutschland 1500-1960 (Bern, 1961), p. 103.
This is a translation of English literature in Germany
(Berkeley, 1953). The German edition was the latest
available to me.

²Fritz von Manikowski, Die Welt- und Lebensanschauung
in dem „Irdischen Vergnügen in Gott“ von Barthold
Heinrich Brockes (diss. Greifswald, 1914), p. 83.

In Shaftesbury's writing the most appropriate passage for comparison is from volume I:

For let Will be ever so free, Humour and Fancy, we see, govern it. And these, as free as we suppose them, are often changed we know not how, without asking our consent, or giving us any account. If opinion be that which governs and makes the change, 'tis itself as liable to be governed and varied in its turn. And by what I can observe of the world, fancy and opinion stand pretty much upon the same bottom. So that if there be no certain inspector or auditor established within us to take account of these opinions and fancies in due form, and minutely to animadvert upon their several growths and habits, we are as little like to continue a day in the same will as a tree, during a summer, in the same shape, without the gardener's assistance, and the vigorous application of the shears and pruning-knife.¹

The important thing about Shaftesbury's idea of the will is the control which must be exercised over recalcitrant "fancy" and "humour" and other mental processes subject to change. What Brockes calls the "Unterredung mit sich selbst," sometimes called "soliloquy" by Shaftesbury, is the method of supervising our thought processes and ensuring stability and sanity to a self in danger of losing both. Philosophy² helps to keep us the self-same persons and so regulate our governing fancies, passions, and humours (I, 184).

It is not clear what Brockes is trying to say in the first part of the passage quoted, but it seems to me that he has changed the emphasis and misunderstood

¹Characteristics, vol. I, p. 122.

²This controlling factor is given various names: Philosophy I, 106; I, 184; I, 122; I, 192-3; self-examiner I, 112; correctrice I, 208; in I, 122 it is compared to an Inquisition.

Shaftesbury. His interpretation of "Phantasey" does not correspond to Shaftesbury's ideas either. Throughout the Characteristics Shaftesbury regards the imagination as unstable and dangerous, a force which threatens to overthrow man unless he governs it. "Every man indeed who is not absolutely beside himself, must of necessity hold his fancies under some kind of discipline and management ... Either I work on my fancies, or they on me" (I, 208). Soliloquy helps to control the imagination (I, 106).

Brockes' interpretation of the choice of good and rejection of evil is again an over-simplification. For Shaftesbury, the question of choosing good is highly complicated, as we are misled by unreliable factors like fancy (II, 149-50), interest and pleasure (I, 199-200). Once again it is the controlling faculty which must take over and determine what is the highest good.

The idea that Brockes was an enthusiastic reader of Shaftesbury is misleading, as it might suggest to some that Brockes had read Shaftesbury from cover to cover. This cannot be assumed from the evidence which Manikowski presents. Brockes' attempt to restate Shaftesbury's views in this poem does not indicate a thorough knowledge. Irrespective of how Brockes obtained his information about Shaftesbury, he was not capable of presenting his ideas clearly and accurately.

In philosophical works of this kind Brockes flounders like a "waffling" student in an exam and is out of his depth. He is more at home with his own simple

brand of philosophy, the enjoyment of God's world, and one wonders why he wrote this type of poetry. It could simply be because he versified without discrimination whatever came his way or that he was vain¹ enough to suppose himself capable of philosophizing.

In Brockes' Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott there are translations of disparate material which has little to do with Brockes' own ideas and interests. They are of no interest as far as our present subject is concerned, except that they reveal how unselective Brockes could be in what he versified and published. The most important of these are some translations of several fables written in 1719 by Antoine Houdar de la Motte (1672-1731). They are printed in volume II of the Irdisches Vergnügen. In translating them, Brockes was reflecting a contemporary interest in this form of didacticism. Gay's fables were also popular in England.

¹Various important people would certainly contribute to his vanity by asking for his opinion about certain difficult questions. The Fürstin von Schaumburg asked him to write a poem on „Wie fern die Kraft der Seelen geh' und ob wir Sterblichen die Gaben,/Vernünftig was vorher zu sehn, zu träumen und zu ahnden haben?/Und was dann eigentlich das Ahnden? (IX, 498 ff.) Brockes tries his best, but confesses that he does not know; the only thing he knows is that the Princess is "ein Muster durchlaucht'ger Prinzeßinnen." Brandl considers Brockes to be vain: „Aber unserm Brockes wurden die blendenden Ehren gefährlich. Er begann sich als großer Mann zu fühlen. Ein Ausfluß dieser Selbstgefälligkeit ist die Autobiographie (begonnen 1724). Es ist auffallend, wie ihm darin nur das, was er selbst versuchte, litt und ausführte, erzählenswert scheint, wie er nur sich selbst aller Orten sieht und bei jeder Gefahr, die an ihm vorübergeht, an eine directe Hilfeleistung der göttlichen Vorsehung denkt" (p. 62).

There are many scraps of poems translated from the classics and from contemporary European writers,¹ and some which are simply called "translations" without a reference to the author.² Most poems from this miscellaneous group are quite different from Brockes' usual poems and suggest that he was not always discriminating in his choice of material.

Brockes published his translation of Pope's Essay on Man in 1740. Although certain ideas³ are echoed in the Irdisches Vergnügen, Pope seems to me to be relatively unimportant for Brockes' development. The idea that Pope influenced Brockes persists.⁴ Alois Brandl in a section on Brockes, "Wendung zur Naturdichtung nach dem Muster der Engländer," writes:

Die hervorragendsten Muster für diese beschreibende und erzählende Naturdichtung mußte er natürlich bei den Engländern, bei Cowley, Milton und Pope, für die moralisierende auch in dem Spectator und Guardian suchen.

(pp. 34-35)

¹Ovid and Livy in vol. VI; Voltaire (VI, 710); Olivier Patru, Madame Deshoullères, Marthurin Régnier in vol. II; and many others.

²"Die Ewigkeit" (Metzler, p. 698); and others.

³The idea of the "microscopic eye" found in the writings of Locke, Bentley, Brockes and Thomson. Above, p. 72.

⁴Friederike Diamant, Die Naturdichtung von Pope, Brockes und Haller. Ein Vergleich (diss. Vienna, 1937). Emil Ermatinger, Die deutsche Lyrik (Leipzig, Berlin, 1921), vol. I, p. 4. Otto Janssen, Naturempfindung und Naturgefühl bei Barthold Heinrich Brockes in dem "Irdischen Vergnügen in Gott" (diss. Bonn, 1907), p. 8. Andreas Müller, Landschaftserlebnis und Landschaftsbild: Studien zur deutschen Dichtung des 18. Jahrhunderts und der Romantik ([Stuttgart], 1955), p. 27.

These statements are presented as are many of Brandl's statements, without further evidence. In the case of Pope, Brandl supplies a footnote which enables the reader to examine the question for himself:

Bei Pope kommen natürlich die „Schäfergedichte“ (1709) und der „Wald von Windsor“ (1713) in Betracht.

In Windsor-Forest¹ the presence of Muses, nymphs and Greek deities differentiates the poetic atmosphere from that of Brockes' poems. In this different context are several descriptive touches--lawns and glades, russet plains and bluish hills, wild heath and purple dyes, fruitful fields and tufted trees. The lines (44-45) "A dreary Desart and a gloomy Waste,/To Savage Beasts and Savage Laws a Prey..." may remind Brockes' readers of the wilder passages which we have identified with the sublime, except that Pope's lines are devoid of the sublime atmosphere; the context is political and historical as the editors' excellent footnotes confirm. The theme of retirement is found in association with the cosmic journey motif:

Happy the Man whom this bright Court approves,
His Sov'reign favours, and his Country loves;
Happy next him who to these Shades retires,

Or looks on Heav'n with more than mortal Eyes,
Bids his free Soul expatiate in the Skies,
Amid her Kindred Stars familiar roam,
Survey the Region, and confess her Home!

Ye sacred Nine! that all my Soul possess,
Whose Raptures fire me, and whose Visions bless,
Bear me, oh bear me to sequester'd Scenes,
The Bow'ry Mazes and surrounding Greens.

(Lines 235-262)

¹Alexander Pope, Pastoral Poetry and an Essay on Criticism, eds. E. Audra and Aubrey Williams (London, 1961), pp. 148-194.

These motifs were not new in 1704 when Pope wrote this part of Windsor Forest.

The humanitarian attitude to hunting expressed by Pope is not shared by Brockes, who feels that animals were made for man's benefit and that this includes the pleasures of hunting.

Of Pope's Pastorals the editors write:

Pope's Pastorals follow the general patterns of classical pastorals: Spring is an amoebaeon eclogue in which two shepherds contend in song, and Autumn is based on a similar alternate scheme, though in it the competitive element is missing; Summer is a love-complaint, and Winter an elegy in memory of a dead shepherdess.
(p. 42)

If these pastorals influenced Brockes, as is claimed, then the most likely poems to reveal this influence would be pastorals by Brockes. There are three in the Hagedorn-Wilckens anthology (Metzler edition)--"Der Herbst" (p. 307-321), "Der Sommer" (p. 132-140), and "Der Winter" (p. 441-454). They have, however, little in common with the classical pastorals as above characterized. There are no lovesick swains languishing in a pastoral setting, but a shadowy figure in a scene which is more important than he is. His only claim to the role of a pastoral figure is his name, and he might just as well be called by the name of B.H. Brockes or some other enthusiastic nature observer. The form of these poems is a kind of pastoral cantata, the same as those of John Hughes (1677-1720), with recitative and aria.¹ These, according to Hughes,

¹The Works of the English Poets, ed. Samuel Johnson (London, 1810), vol. X, pp. 30 ff.

were "after the manner of the Italians." But apart from the form, there is no resemblance, for those of Hughes really are pastorals. Brockes has merely adapted the form for his new content, natural description.

As far as natural description is concerned, there is little in Pope's Pastorals to influence Brockes. Nature is subordinated to the pastoral conventions. It is called upon to echo the feelings of the suffering shepherd:

Go gentle Gales, and bear my Sighs along!
The Birds shall cease to tune their Ev'ning Song,
The Winds to breathe, the waving Woods to move,
And Streams to murmur, e'er I cease to love.
(Autumn, lines 39-42)

"Resound ye Hills, resound my mournful Lay!" In the pastoral Winter when Daphne dies, all nature dies:

'Tis done, and Nature's various Charms decay;
See gloomy Clouds obscure the chearful Day!
Now hung with Pearls the dropping Trees appear,
Their faded Honours scatter'd on her Bier.
(Lines 29-32)

Occasional lines of description are always associated with the main characters. "Behold the Groves that shine with silver Frost,/Their Beauty wither'd, and their Verdure lost" (Winter, 9-10) is not a description of winter but an expression of grief for the death of Daphne. Brockes' poem on winter is entirely descriptive, apart from the occasional interpolation of religious thoughts.

Brockes' description of summer in "Der Sommer" is mainly concerned with waving fields of golden corn and the provision of bread for man. Thyrsis watches the peasants mowing and threshing the corn. We note that he is not participating in this activity nor is he watching sheep or sighing for shepherdesses. Instead he observes

reflects and sings of his gratitude to God for corn and bread. Pope's Summer is quite different. His shepherd complains of "Love's fiercer flames" which torment him day and night. There are no descriptions of cornfields only silver springs, verdant forests and flowery meads as the setting in which he bemoans his fate (lines 1-4). Sylvan scenes are frequented by gods "and chaste Diana haunts the Forest Shade." As in Brockes' poem there are reapers but they exist in this poem merely to denote evening, a time when the shepherd implores

Come lovely Nymph, and bless the silent Hours,
When Swains from Sheering seek their nightly Bow'rs;
When weary Reapers quit the sultry Field,
And crown'd with Corn, their Thanks to Ceres yield.
(Lines 63-66)

Brockes' "Der Herbst" draws a picture of the beauty of falling leaves, the gold and silver sky, the fruit and vines, and the blessings of eating and drinking. Pope's lover is still sighing and requesting nature to join in his mournful strain. There are a few of the usual descriptive stock phrases--fleecy clouds streaked with purple light, low vales with oxen, and curling smoke from villages, but again, more as a setting than for its own sake. There are three points in Pope's poem which slightly resemble what Brockes has written, and the fact that they are really the only ones in all the poems which we have discussed in connection with the pastorals shows how little supporting evidence Brandl's contention has. Pope talks of golden fruits, Brockes of apples as "eßbares Gold," Pope mentions "blushing berries" (p. 85), Brockes "der

Hagebutten brennend Roth," Pope writes of "floods of wine," Brockes describes the vines and praises the wine. (It is very unlikely that either England or Hamburg grew vines, hardly such fruitful ones.)

It is strange that a writer who is so close in spirit to Brockes as is Abbé Noël Antoine Pluche has never been associated with him in the most important discussions of Brockes' work. Frequent references to his Spectacle de la Nature¹ in foregoing chapters have already demonstrated his importance for the background of Brockes' poems. Pluche is not a great writer but his work was very popular and influential.² A.D. McKillop gives the Spectacle de la Nature as a source for some of the sections of Thomson's Seasons. Brockes, in several of his poems, acknowledges his debt to the same work.³ This does not mean that Pluche was a decisive influence on Brockes' poetic career; Brockes merely versified several passages which appealed to him, for he was writing the same kind of thing in his scientific poems of volume I and volume II which were printed before the publication of the Spectacle

¹Above, p. 41. The work is written in prose.

²McKillop, p. 82 discusses its popularity and importance. Reference is made to Daniel Mornet, Les sciences de la nature en France, au xviii^e siècle (Paris, 1911), pp. 8-9, 248, 263 which says that it was one of the most popular works of the century.

³The following poems are based on Pluche: VI, 78; VI, 471; VI, 406; VII, 177; VII, 202; VIII, 360. Each of these is accompanied by the acknowledgment "Nach Anleitung des Spectacl. de la Nat."

de la Nature. Both Pluche and Brockes were obviously using similar sources, the sources which we have already discussed. Pluche acknowledged them as Malpighi, Grew, Derham, Redi, Leeuwenhoek, Nieuwentijdt, Willughby, the scientific reports of the Royal Society and the Académie des Sciences.¹ The subjects which I have been tracing in their combination of science and theology are all in the work of Pluche.²

I am devoting more space to the question of Brockes and Pluche than might seem justified. The subject has received no attention at all³ and the texts are almost inaccessible. For this reason I shall give a

¹Above, p. 42.

²The subjects are: light, climate, fire, air, minerals, plants, sun, moon and stars, the sea (why it contains salt and why there is ebb and flow), the circulation of water, rivers and springs, animals, the body as God's masterpiece. Pious thoughts are scattered throughout the scientific material--divine workmanship, the Book of Nature, reveals God's wisdom and power. God has made the world for man and supplies all his needs; we must be grateful and worship him.

³Maurice Colleville, La Renaissance du lyrisme dans la poésie allemande du XVIII^e siècle (Paris, [1936]), pp. 163-4 seems to be the only writer to relate Pluche and Brockes. But his discussion seems to go off the track through his desire to explain Brockes' work as "l'expression d'une tendance profonde de l'âme allemande et comme une nouvelle manifestation d'une secrète mystique." He therefore brushes aside the influence of writers such as Addison, Thomson, Young and Shaftesbury: "Mais qu'ils soient anglais ou français, ces ouvrages étrangers ne constituent qu'un apport extérieur, sans lien étroit et direct avec une tradition allemande. Or une tradition purement étrangère ne saurait porter le poids d'une oeuvre en neuf volumes qui compte quelque 7.000 pages et 140.000 vers environ."

summary of the contents of the poems. If they seem to be disjointed and trivial, it is because the originals are often like that. Brockes sometimes leaves out the causal links in Pluche's arguments, so that the resulting poem does not always succeed in presenting the ideas clearly enough.

The poems based on Pluche belong entirely to the scientific-theological context.¹ There is nothing sublime about the sea in the poem "Fernere Betrachtung des der Erde so nützlichen Weltmeers."² This consists of nine pages in a style which resembles prose concerning, as the title suggests, the utility of the sea. Our blessings are from the sea, as nothing could subsist without water. Its wonderful order displays God's wisdom, love and power. The heat of the sun draws up a supply of vapour which falls as rain instead of in large quantities and supplies streams and rivers. Salt in the sea shows God's wisdom. We do not understand ebb and flow but know that it prevents putrefaction. The wind keeps the sea in motion for the same purpose. We do not know the reasons for these things but it is "stolzer Hochmut" to try to understand. The sun raises the water from the sea and this makes for fruitfulness. Because of the salt content, however, not all of the water evaporates. Therefore, thanks to salt, water is kept under control, otherwise the world would be submerged. Experiments in measuring rainfall and water

¹Above, pp. 41-44.

²VI, 375-383, Tübingen; Hamburg, pp. 417ff.; Pluche III, dial. xxii. The complete text is given in the Appendix, pp. 415- 420.

are next discussed especially those of Mariotte of the French Academy. The poem ends with the idea that those who fail to see divinity in all this wisdom are devoid of reason.

The poem "Würdige und rechte Anwendung der Naturlehre"¹ begins with an idea which is quite common in Brookes' poems--God wants to be admired not understood. The world is full of wonders (Wunder) which are for our moral benefit and not to tax our cleverness. They inspire in us gratitude and cause us to elevate and honour the great source of all goodness. God does not require us to understand the inner structure of creation and has concealed such knowledge from us:

Er will uns, im Begriff, so sehr nicht überführen,
Auf welche Weis' er alle Pracht,
Von seiner Creatur, gemacht;
Er will uns hier nur bloß, durch seine Wohlthat,
rühren.
So zeigen uns demnach die Wunder der Natur,
Die Menge Göttlicher Geschenke nur.

The function of science is to make us aware of God's bounty; it is useless unless it is linked to the heart. The heart is to man as man is to Nature; all the order (Ordnung) in Nature is useless without man to benefit from it. The poem concludes with the lines:

Wofern sein Hertz nicht Antheil daran nimmt,
Wie alles, für des Menschen Hertz; so ist das Hertz
für Gott, bestimmt.

The poem "Überzeugliche Beweiß=Gründe eines göttlichen Wesens"² consists of most of the usual arguments

¹VI, 366-7, Tübingen; Hamburg, pp. 406 f. Pluche, III, "L'usage du spectacle de la nature," Lettre du Prieur au Chevalier.

²VI, 422-427, Tübingen; Hamburg, pp. 471 ff.; Pluche, III, "L'usage du spectacle de la nature," Lettre du Prieur au Chevalier.

for the existence of God.¹ A Red Indian finds a watch; he turns it round, tries to fathom how it works, thinks that it is alive or that it encloses some deity. We are just like him when we see the "Wunderuhr des schönen Weltgebäudes." Philosophers try in vain to understand the great Creator's purpose. But the simple honest man can see in Nature the "Wunderuhr," a reflection of "Gottes Finger." Nature is like a mirror (wie ein Spiegel), like a public sermon which announces "In seinen Wercken, unsers Schöpfers unsichtbare Vollkommenheit." Philosophy is quite unnecessary, for all men can attain this knowledge through observing Nature; it is the "Gottes=Lehre aller Völcker." It is a pleasant school in which we are taught through using our eyes to observe God's unity, wisdom, power, providence, majesty and magnificence in the beauty and charm of Nature.

The poem "Nützliche Blumen=Betrachtung"² opens with the question of why flowers give pleasure. The secret process which renews plants annually brings us delight. Flowers, with their superb shape and colouring, are made for us alone; animals are unmoved by them and walk over them. They bring us joy:

Es ist unwidersprechlich wahr,
Daß ihre bunt gefärbte Schaar,
In uns ein Anmuths=Feur erreget,
Und recht zu süsser Lust beweget.

¹Above, p. 73.

²VI, 70-78, Tübingen; Hamburg, pp. 78ff.; Pluche, II, dial. i.

There are flowers everywhere, in meadows, mountains and deserts and in the home. On festive occasions they are associated with joy, but are really incompatible with sorrow and mourning. There is always some kind of flower blooming, as if they had arranged among themselves when to flower, so that there should be no gaps throughout the year. Each is unique, completely different from the others; their colours are inexhaustible and shade off into one another in almost imperceptible gradations. Flowers as works of art are superior to man's works. Brockes interpolates throughout the whole poem the ideas that flowers are there for our pleasure and that they clearly reveal "Gottes Spur." The "Herr der Erde," man, is "Königlich bedient" since his path is strewn with flowers and he can breathe their rich fragrance on his evening walks. They also serve as medicines. The contemplation of the things which God has created raises us to the Creator, since creation reveals his being (Wesen):

Ja, da er, mit so holder Liebe, so flüchtige
Geschöpfe schmückt,
Die heute sind und Morgen nicht, die wie zertreten
mit den Füßen;
Was kan man nicht von seiner Huld, von seiner ewgen
Liebe schliessen,
Das uns, durch ihn, geschehen wird, da er uns
selber zugeschickt,
Zu Gegenwürfen seiner Güte! Was kan und wird, nach
dieser Erden,
Wenn er Verlangen und Begierden, die er dem Geist
selbst eingeprägt,
Erfüllen und vergnügen will, uns nicht für Reichthum
zugelegt,
Und, wenn Gott Geister schmücken will, für Herrlich-
keit geschencket werden!

The original text was:

Et s'il veut bien habiller si magnifiquement des créatures si peu durables qui seront séchées demain & foulées aux piés, comme l'herbe des champs, que fera-t-il pour nous qui sommes l'objet de sa complaisance? Quelles richesses ne nous prodiguera-t-il pas, quand il remplira les désirs qu'il a lui-même mis en nous, & lorsqu'il embellira les esprits?

The poem "Noch ein Anhang zur Wiese"¹ treats the subject of meadows purely from the utilitarian point of view. Meadows feed the animals which are necessary for our food and clothing. The ox is useful for ploughing and for food. The horse serves us in innumerable ways. The cow and the sheep supply food and clothes. It is a miracle how grass is turned into meat and milk and how it gives strength to horses. We cannot make milk from grass, yet the cow can. Grass just grows without any efforts on our part. If there were to be a serious drought, then all would be confusion; all of the human race would be miserable.

This is another case of an inferior poem. A direct prose translation would have been better. It is something of a mystery that Brockes has apparently not learnt from the experience of using foreign material in the preceding six volumes to produce something better than such mediocre efforts.

"Die Morgen=Röthe"² is a poem based on Pluche's "Aurora." The heathen (the ancients) have always honoured

¹VII, 165-167; Hamburg, pp. 177ff.; Pluche, III, dial. xvii. See Appendix, p. 422 for text.

²VII, 185-193, Tübingen; Hamburg, pp. 202ff.; Pluche, IV, dial. v.

the dawn in their poetry with fanciful descriptions, but nature does not need such embellishment.

Nun sind zwar solche Stellen reizend, sind süß und
angenehm zu lesen;
Jedoch gebrauchet die Natur dergleichen schlechten
Schmincke nicht.

Pluche writes:

Ces imaginations poëtiques ont quelque chose
d'agréable; mais les traits fabuleux qu'on y joint
à la vérité ne sont qu'un fard qui la déguise & qui
en altère la beauté.

It is better to consider the pure natural aurora. It is like a new creation, revealing to us a new picture of mountains, flowery valleys, green forests and grassy meadows. "Aus dem dunklen Nichts" man is raised from sleep, a kind of death, and has the use of his faculties and his arms and legs once more. This is another gift from God. The morning calls us to work, and work is the source of happiness. The cock wakes us up and the chorus of birds helps to drive away sleep. Cattle, horses, all things, stir; farmers and artisans prepare for work. But some animals, like the fox, deer and stag, retire into the dark forest. There is singing and pipe-playing; a traveller passes. One wonders why these animals leave in this way, since they are not being hunted. They go of their own free will as if "Die unsichtbare Hand des Schöpfers weiß sie zu entfernen..." so as to leave man, "der Herr der Erden," to view his property and go about his business undisturbed. This shows "des Schöpfers Ordnungen..." Pluche writes:

Une main puissante les chasse malgré eux au fond des bois, & le roi de la terre ne voit plus rien qui puisse troubler son travail ou gêner sa liberté.

A long passage on dew is shortened in Brockes' version. Vapour is carried into the upper air by the sun, is circulated by the wind, and drops as water which nourishes plants. The sunrise is described in all its lively colours and is compared to gold and pearls. We are moved by what we see and long for the source of light. Ever-widening beams spread across the sky until the sun itself appears:

Das ganze Wesen der Natur verändert sich, wird gantz
verklärt,
In ihr wird ihres Schöpfers Wesen am allerwürdigsten
verehrt.

"Neue Betrachtungen über die Natur des Lichts und der Wärme"¹ is a mass of scientific material used to demonstrate how the wise Creator has devised light and warmth for our benefit and pleasure. Brockes' method of adapting the material from Pluche is the same as in the other poems, except that he has taken ideas from different parts. Nothing can be gained by summarizing this long boring poem. The style is just as bad and the ideas just as nebulous as in those already discussed.

Although Brockes' treatment of the Spectacle de la Nature cannot be considered a milestone in his development, it suggests more questions which will have to be dealt with later. How can the same writer produce such poor results on the one hand and such admirable results on the other in his use of sources? The lines based on Burnet are of a different order from those based on Pluche. How can a writer in his sixth volume of poems

¹VIII, 325-356, Tübingen; Hamburg, pp. 360-391; Pluche, III, dial. vii and IV, dial. xi.

write work which is vastly inferior to the poems of the first two volumes? An attempt will be made in a later chapter to answer such questions.

The question of the influence of Arndt and Scriver has been touched upon several times¹ in the course of this study, and I have suggested that it is not very significant. Our background study should now show that Brandl's ideas on this subject are far from adequate:

Aus ihren prosaischen Erbauungsbüchern lernte er [Brockes] die Erde und alles, was auf ihr wächst, als ein „lebendiges Buch anschauen, in welches der Finger Gottes seine Liebe geschrieben.“²

The three writers certainly shared the conception of the "book of nature," but there is no proof that Brockes derived the idea uniquely from them, especially since it was one of the commonest of commonplaces. With the idea of the world as the book of nature as a starting-point all three go their separate ways.

Brandl writes of Scriver's influence on Brockes:

... auch schienen ihm die schlichten Geschichtchen in „Gotthold's zufälligen Andachten“ eine so zusagende Form, daß er sie in manchen früher entstandenen Gedichten des „Irdischen Vergnügens“ getreu nachahmte.

I have not devoted too much time to an examination of this thesis, since Scriver's emblematic style and otherworldliness are backward-looking, and any influence which they may have had has little to contribute to Brockes' literary development. However, several points are worth

¹Above, pp. 12, 59.

²Brandl, p. 41.

noting.

Scriver¹ and Brockes are fundamentally different in their style and outlook, but Brockes occasionally reflects the world and tradition of Scriver. There are very few poems which closely resemble Scriver's emblems, and it seems an exaggeration when Brandl claims that many of the early poems reproduced them faithfully. Both Arndt and Scriver are more concerned with the other world than with this one, which is merely a mirror. They do not observe the world and its contents for its own sake, but merely for its didactic possibilities. Much of this didacticism is directly opposed to Brockes' belief in the importance of enjoying life on this earth. Scriver's "Seiden=Wurm" (LXXXII, p. 363) reminds us of man's mortality; "Die Schlange" (LXXXIX) warns us of the power of evil and the danger of eternal damnation; "Die Spinne" (LXIX, pp. 332-333), which catches flies in its web, provokes this reflection: „Ach wie mancher Welt= und Geld=süchtiger Mensch ist diesem Ungezieffer gleich...." Gotthold's remarks show a preoccupation with the after-world and the dangers of the present world. He sees a ship sailing against the stream: „Hie hab ich, sprach er, eine Vorstellung meiner Reise nach dem Himmel: Die Welt ist der gewaltige Stroh, die... viel mit sich fort ins Meer des Verderbens reisset..." (VIII, pp. 12-13). There is nothing cosmic and infinite about the sun, moon and stars which Scriver writes about; they merely inspire in

¹ Gottholds zufälliger Andachten... (Leipzig, 1704).

him the desire to shine morally. The sun reminds him of Jesus, his sun and joy (Der gestirnte Himmel, LXXVII). Winter stands for the bitterness of this world and summer for the beauty of the next.

Brandl is surely mistaken in considering Arndt and Sriver as stages in Brockes' development as a poet of natural description. These writers turn their backs on the world; there is so little natural description in Sriver's emblems that one feels he scarcely notices the beauty of the world. There is a superficial resemblance; Gotthold and Brockes' observer (sometimes himself, sometimes Licidas or another pseudo-pastoral character) look at an object and express their thoughts concerning it.

„Gotthold hörete eine Wachtel etliche mahl anschlagen, und gerieth darüber in folgende Gedancken..." (Die Wachtel, LXXV). Brockes: „Hierüber fiel ihm folgend's ein..." (Metzler, p. 245). A comparison of Sriver and Brockes on the subject of frogs reveals the fundamental difference between both writers. Sriver writes:

Als bey eintretendem warmen Frühlings=Gewitter die Frösche gegen den Abend sich weidlich hören liessen, bedachte sich GOTTHOLD: was er hiebey vor Erinnerung haben möchte, und fand Anfangs, daß sie ein artiges Bild der nassen Brüder geben könnten...

(Die Frösche, XXXII, pp. 800-801)

Frogs teach Brockes a lesson also. The text of their sermon which they croak most eloquently is "Merck' es." Brockes talks to a frog and agrees with its message:

Gewißlich, du hast recht: man macht so wenig Wercks
Von aller Pracht und Schönheit, so die Welt,
Zumahl im Frühling', in sich hält,
Von allen göttlichen Geschöpf= und Wunder=Wercken;
Daß wir nicht aufs Geschöpf, nicht auf den Schöpfer,
mercken;

Daß man kaum einst daran gedencket,
Sich ihrer nicht erfreut, noch weniger auf Den,
Der aller Dinge HERR, den Allgewaltigen,
Der alles Herrliche geschaffen und uns schencket,
Nebst einem frohen Danck, die frohe Seele lencket.
(Der Frosch, Metzler, pp. 106-107)

These words contain the essence of Brockes' views and are the mainspring of his poetry. But a difference which is really more significant for the present discussion is the attention which Brockes pays to the subject itself, which he really observes and describes accurately. In this case, Brockes listens very carefully to the croaking frogs and notices that all croak in a different way "Der eine quackt, viel hundert quarren." Brockes observes his subjects thoroughly before he expresses his moral lesson; Lcidas sometimes even uses a microscope to observe more details about the object. In many poems one feels that it is the description which is most important and that the thoughts and moral reflections are only interpolated as an afterthought or out of a sense of mission. "Der Fisch-Teich" (Metzler, p. 211) consists of (1) a very lively description of the agile antics and the beautiful colours of fish in a pond (four pages), (2) a typical reflection (13 lines)--"Ach, daß man nicht den Schöpfer preiset,/ Wenn man so holde Schönheit sieht," (3) the poet's emotional reaction of "Lust" and "Ergetzen," and, (4) the conclusion (6 lines) in the form of a prayer:

Ach GOTT! laß mich auf Dich allein,
So oft ich Fische seh', mein' Andacht lencken,
Und denken: wie so groß ist doch des Schöpfers
Macht...

There are other poems of pure description with the religious reflection occurring at the end only. Imogen

Kupffer discusses this point and sees here the beginnings of secularization (p. 34). She also notes that didactic poems and those containing moralizing comparisons decrease progressively throughout the Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott.

There are remnants of the old tradition of Sclaver and the baroque poets in Brockes' poetry. The didactic element is predominant in "Die Kaiser-Krone":

Ach dächten doch die Grossen dieser Erde,
Bey dieser Blum', an ihre Flüchtigkeit,
Und daß auch Gras, nach kurtzer Zeit,
Gekrön'te Häupter decken werde!
(Metzler, p. 60)

"Ephemeris" expresses the old thought: „Wie flüchtig ist doch eure Zeit!" There is nevertheless a change in the old melancholy tradition to suit Brockes' own ideas:

Da aber dieses Thier, indem es munter fliehet,
Dem Ansehn nach, vergnügt ist und sich freut;
So hat es, ungeacht't der kurtzen Lebens=Zeit,
Sich länger auf der Welt, als mancher Mensch, vergnügt.

"Die Muscat-Hyacinthe" is a short poem about a dull flower with a pleasant scent; the lesson it gives is in the old tradition:

Im weltlichen giebst du mir diese Lehre:
Man lasse sich den äusserlichen Schein
Doch keinen Fall=Strick seyn!
Denn ein geflicktes Kleid und schmutz'ger Mantel decket
Gar oft ein Hertz, in welchem Weisheit steckt.
(Metzler, p. 80)

In some of the poems written in cantata form this type of symbolism occurs, but it serves Brockes' attitude to life and lacks Sclaver's otherworldliness.

Aria (6 lines)
Vertreib auch du, vergnügtes Hertze,
Der Blindheit Nacht, des Undancks Schwärtze!
Des Mondes Silber=weisser Schein

Macht einen Eindruck bey den Thieren;
Und dich allein
Soll seiner Strahlen Glantz nicht rühren?
(Betrachtung des Mondscheins, p. 668)

Another example from "Das Wasser im Frühlings":

Ihr Sterblichen, erweg't, bey jedem Wasser=Guß,
Das euer Leben auch ein Fluß,
Der stetig vor= nie rückwärts fließet,
Und daß der Menschen schnelle Zeit
Ins tiefe Meer der Ewigkeit
Unwiederbringlich sich ergießet.
Darum gebrauchet euer Leben,
Wie es Demjenigen gefällt, Der's euch gegeben!
Gebraucht die Creatur zum Nutzen und zur Lust!
(Metzler, pp. 17-26)

Similarly, Brockes transforms a typical carpe diem motif into his own particular kind of outlook on life. The ephemeral flower teaches the reluctant maiden that her beauty too will fade and that she must make the most of her youth. Waller's "lovely Rose" is sent to die in front of the lady that the lesson might be more vivid:

Then die! that she
The common fate of all things rare
May read in thee:
How small a part of time they share
That are so wondrous sweet and fair!

Brockes tells his flower "Die Hyacinthe":

Verblüh denn itzo nur, geliebtes Frühlings=Kind,
Mit Zierde, Lehr' und Lust erfüllte Hyacinth,
Und lege wiederum die zarte Schönheit nieder,
Das Bild der irdischen Vergänglichkeit und Pracht;
Verwelcke nur allmählig wieder;
Du hast allhier, was du gesollt, vollbracht.
Dein Zweck und deine Pflicht war, Gottes Macht zu
 zeigen,
Du hast, da du so schön geblühet und gegrün't,
Auf Leitern der Natur zu Gott zu steigen,
Als eine Sprosse, mir gedient.

In these poems the interest is concentrated on description and life in this world. Brockes uses material and thoughts from the old tradition, but what he does with

it is in most cases a new departure. If the word "influence" is used in connection with Sclaver, then this has to be kept in mind. I should prefer not to use the word at all.

James Thomson (1700-1748) is associated with Brockes in most books on literary history especially since Brockes' translation of The Seasons introduced Thomson to the continent. Both are also called nature poets by some writers. However, the exact relationship between these poets, and their place in the history of literature are still far from clear. The idea that Thomson influenced Brockes is still in circulation,¹ and the question of his general influence is obscured by inaccuracies passed down from unscholarly studies dating from the end of last century.² More recent studies of these questions³ are also far from adequate, since they are written from a modern point of view rather than from an understanding of the conditions and literary climate of the period.

Brandl considered that Brockes' poetry had improved under the influence of Thomson but his evidence for this hypothesis was based on a poem which Brockes took from

¹Notes by Ernst Theodor Voss in Johann Jakob Engel, Über Handlung, Gespräch und Erzählung. Faksimiledruck nach der Ausgabe von 1774 (Metzler, Stuttgart, 1964), p. 98.

²Max Koch, Über die Beziehungen der englischen Literatur zur deutschen im 18. Jahrhundert (1883). Alfred Biese, Die Entwicklung des Naturgefühls im Mittelalter und in der Neuzeit (Leipzig, 1892), p. 286.

³L.M. Price, op.cit., pp. 415-416 gives a list of these in his bibliography.

Shaftesbury¹ and is therefore invalidated. On the whole, Brandl thinks that Brockes' encounter with Thomson's poetry came too late in his career:

Aber Brockes war zu spät bei Thomson in die Schule gekommen. Neben den Gedichten, welche in diesen Vorzügen prangen, stehen viele mit der alten Steifheit, Spielerei und Alltäglichkeit behaftete. Noch weniger ist an eine originelle Weiterbildung der Manier Thomsons zu denken.
(pp. 99-100)

Some writers on Brockes deny the influence.² Gjerset³ thinks that Brockes was too old to change his habitual manner of writing, but that he employed a new technique in volume VII, which consisted of arranging his poems according to the seasons. This idea has come down to present writers.⁴ Van Tieghem writes:

Nous avons vu Brockes chanter séparément les quatre saisons dès son premier volume. Son septième volume (1746) constitue un véritable poème des Saisons, incohérent sans doute, encore morcelé, mais où s'aperçoit un plan d'ensemble.⁵

Brockes has merely divided each volume into four sections with the names of the seasons as title pages and attempted as far as possible to place his poems in the appropriate

¹Above, pp. 8-10.

²Price, op. cit., says that the influence is overestimated. Harold Jantz, "Brockes' Poetic Apprenticeship," MLN, LXXVII (1962), 440 displaying impatience with writers who disseminate myths about Brockes, writes: "Just how a work published in 1721 could be influenced by a work published in 1726, critics and historians do not tell us."

³Knut Gjerset, Der Einfluß von Thomsons Jahreszeiten auf die deutsche Literatur des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts (Heidelberg, 1898), p. 16.

⁴Price, op. cit., p. 102.

⁵Paul van Tieghem, Le sentiment de la Nature dans le Pré-romantisme Européen (Paris, 1960), p. 50.

section. Fundamentally there is no difference, and the prominence given to such a minor detail seems to me to be unjustified.

L.M. Price compares Thomson and Brockes and finds that Brockes pays greater attention to the description of small things and to sights, sounds and scents. He was not so good as Thomson at description because he lacked Thomson's imagination and because the German language was less rich.

Außerdem fehlte ihm Thomsons landschaftsweiter Blick und dessen Bewunderung für unregelmäßiges Gelände und unberührte Gefilde. Thomson suchte die von Ferne grüßenden Gipfel, Brockes die schattigen Bachufer und ebenen Wiesen.

(p. 102)

Later, Price tells us that Brockes described wider perspectives in the concluding sections of his work:

Doch zeigt Brockes eine unverkennbare Neigung, in den Schlußteilen seines Werkes die mikroskopischen Beschreibungen von Blättern, Blumen und kleinen Gegenständen aufzugeben und sein Auge wie Thomson in die Ferne schweifen zu lassen.

(p. 103)

This brief analysis cannot go uncorrected. It is true that Thomson is the greater poet. Brockes was guilty of writing very bad poetry and very weak description but there are more passages of excellent description than he has been given credit for. Several poems on storms, seascapes and skyscapes reveal considerable linguistic versatility. As the foregoing chapters have revealed, Brockes was interested in irregular and even wild landscapes from the earliest volumes of his Irdisches Vergnügen. The world of the infinitely small revealed by the microscope

interested him not for its smallness, but as part of the infinitely great.¹ When he writes about the sky or the sea, he expresses an attitude to space which is unparalleled in the German literature of the time. Writers on Brockes see him as a poet who sits in his garden composing poems about restrained peaceful natural scenes, obviously because they have not read Brockes thoroughly. Brockes has written poems which fit into this category but this is not where his importance lies, as I see it.

Price also mentions certain linguistic similarities between Thomson and Brockes, but this, he admits, may be due to a common classical heritage. One would expect the task of translating the Seasons to mark Brockes in some way, but signs of this contact are not so easy to establish. Brockes seems to have written the same kind of poetry before his encounter with Thomson as after, because of common sources and a common background. "Morgengedanken" and "Frühlingsgedicht" in volume VII of the Irdisches Vergnügen are based on passages from the Seasons and will be discussed later in connection with hymnic poetry.

It would be interesting to know why Brockes translated Thomson's Seasons, as this would contribute to our knowledge of the period. It is obvious from this study that both writers belong to the same background² and that

¹Above, p. 194.

²Kupffer, p. 119 finds Brockes and Thomson completely different. I think that they are remarkably similar. Their themes and outlook are identical, except that Brockes is more banal at times. Thomson's style is much more elevated and there is more emphasis on benevolence in his work.

Brockes saw a reflection of his own interests, certainly better expressed, in Thomson's work. Passages from B. J. Zinck's preface¹ to the translation are worth reproducing, since they give valuable information.

The preface begins with a restatement of Brockes' outlook according to Zinck. He emphasizes the position of the enemies more than Brockes would have done. These are the orthodox, who call Brockes and his followers "Naturalisten" and "Freidenker." Brockes' religion is one of "Glückseligkeit," the senses being "Werkzeuge zum Vergnügen" which brighten our days (Tage versüßen) and show us "wie freundlich Gott ist." Brockes is a leading figure in the conversion of such people to the beauty of the world:

Man wird hier dem Verfasser des irdischen Vergnügens in Gott, welcher durch seine erbauliche Schriften viele um Natur und Wahrheit unbekümmerte Barbaren unsers Vaterlandes zur Aufmerksamkeit gebracht hat, die erste Stelle einräumen² müssen.

Thomson and Brockes have the same aims in writing:

Dieselben Ursachen, Welche diesen würdigen Mann bewogen haben in seinen Schriften die Schönheit der Natur, ihrem allmächtigen Schöpfer zu Ehren, vorzustellen, haben ihn auch veranlasset gegenwärtige Uebersetzung zu unternehmen. Die mit seinem Endzweck übereinstimmende Absicht, und die glückliche Ausführung des Englischen Dichters, haben ihn dergestalt gerühret, daß er es für eine Schuldigkeit erachtet, Fleiß und Mühe anzuwenden, seinen Landsleuten die erhabne, tiefsinnige und majestätische Art, womit der Brittische Dichter seinen großen Vorwurf abhandelt, vor Augen zu legen.

¹B. J. Zinck. The name is written as Zink in the preface of the 26th September 1744 to the Jahreszeiten (Hamburg, 1745).

²It is not clear in the text whether "einräumen" has an umlaut.

Morton Collins Stewart¹ has devoted two articles to the study of Brockes' translation of Thomson's Seasons. He discusses linguistic considerations, the opinions of critics and subsequent translations. Brockes translated fairly freely and, apart from a number of mis-translations, generally reproduced the sense. He expanded the original by circumlocution and the addition of a few of his own thoughts; the result lacks the strength and simplicity of the original. Despite a multitude of shortcomings, Brockes' work has, however, made a contribution to the development of poetry by clothing the heavier original in a gay simple garb.

Joseph Addison has been referred to throughout this study and occupies an important place in the background of Brockes' poetry. Marjorie Nicolson and Alan McKillop have realized his importance for English literature, but his relationship to Brockes has not been studied. Alois Brandl mentions that Brockes has been called the "German Addison," but does not develop the idea. Brockes' association with the Hamburg moral weekly "Der Patriot" would qualify him for that title in the minds of his contemporaries, who would not be aware of his greater importance in the history of literature and of thought. Brandl (p. 35) has also suggested that the moralizing tendencies of the Spectator and the Guardian might have influenced Brockes.

In connection with his study of European nature

¹Morton Collins Stewart, "Barthold Heinrich Brockes' Thomson's Seasons," JEGP, X (1911), 20-41.

van Tieghem only mentions Addison three times. He considers him as a classical writer, the opposite of Shakespeare, among the admirers of the formal gardens of Versailles. Addison's contribution to the aesthetics of the sublime discussed in chapter VI of this study conflicts with such a view. No. 414 of the Spectator also contradicts this alleged preference for regular gardens and landscape. Addison writes:

The Beauties of the most stately Garden or Palace lie in a narrow Compass, the Imagination immediately runs them over and requires something else to gratify her; but, in the wide Fields of Nature, the Sight wanders up and down without Confinement, and is fed with an infinite variety of Images, without any certain Stint or Number. For this Reason we always find the Poet in Love with a Country-Life, where Nature appears in the greatest Perfection, and furnishes out all those Scenes that are most apt to delight the Imagination.

Van Tieghem also underestimates the role which Addison plays in the development of nature poetry:

Addison dans le Spectator évoque plusieurs fois les charmes de la campagne, mais le caractère de son périodique ne lui permet guère d'insister; ce qui est remarquable, c'est qu'il lui ait fait une petite place.

(p. 137)

Van Tieghem has overlooked Addison's important role, because he is looking for a certain attitude to nature which he has constructed from later nature poetry, without reference to the background which I have been tracing. Viewed in the context, Addison is in the forefront with his germinal ideas. He writes in No. 393 of the Spectator:

Natural Philosophy quickens this Taste of the Creation, and renders it not only pleasing to the Imagination, but to the Understanding. It does not

rest in the Murmur of Brooks, and the Melody of Birds, in the Shade of Groves and Woods, or in the Embroidery of Fields and Meadows, but considers the several Ends of Providence which are served by them, and the Wonders of Divine Wisdom which appear in them. It heightens the Pleasures of the Eye, and raises such a rational Admiration in the Soul as is little inferior to Devotion.

The combination of science, theology and nature in this quotation places it in the context which we have been tracing.

All the elements are there:

The Creation is a perpetual Feast to the Mind of a Good Man, every thing he sees cheers and delights him...

Such happiness is also allied to gratitude:

The Cheerfulness of Heart which springs up in us from the Survey of Nature's Works, is an admirable Preparation for gratitude. The Mind has gone a great way towards Praise and Thanksgiving that is filled with a secret Gladness: A grateful Reflection on the supreme Cause who produces it, sanctifies it in the Soul, and gives it its proper Value. Such an habitual Disposition of Mind consecrates every Field and Wood, turns an ordinary Walk into a morning or evening Sacrifice, and will improve those transient Gleams of Joy, which naturally brighten up and refresh the Soul on such Occasions, into an inviolable and perpetual State of Bliss and Happiness.

Man's happiness, God and Nature are part of the same web of ideas and cannot be separated. God made the world for our pleasure:

If we consider the World in its Subserviency to Man, one would think it was made for our Use; but if we consider it in its Natural Beauty and Harmony, one would be apt to conclude it was made for our Pleasure. (Spectator 387)

Later in the same essay:

We may further observe how Providence has taken Care to keep up this Cheerfulness in the Mind of Man, by having formed it after such a Manner, as to make it capable of conceiving Delight from several Objects which seem to have very little Use in them, as from the Wildness of Rocks and Desarts, and the like grotesque Parts of Nature.

In this life God has given man so many faculties for enjoyment:

We may therefore look into our selves with Rapture and Amazement, and cannot sufficiently express our Gratitude to him, who has encompassed us with such a Profusion of Blessings, and opened in us so many Capacities of enjoying them.

(Spectator 600)

Happiness is the purpose behind creation:

...the End for which he designed his reasonable Offspring is the Contemplation of his Works, the Enjoyment of himself, and in both to be happy.

(Spectator 635
by Henry Grove)

The future life will consist of a higher form of happiness through the revelation of the "hidden Springs of Nature's Operations" and the contemplation of God.

These Platonic ideas are reminiscent of the background of the Cambridge Platonists. When Addison considers the heavenly bodies and the vastness of space, he thinks of the infinite God (Spectator 565). Like the Psalmist--Addison quotes the relevant passage--man wonders, "What is man?" The resulting "melancholy Thought, of our being overlooked by our Maker in the Multiplicity of his Works" is dispelled when we think of God's omnipresence:

His Being passes through, actuates and supports the whole Frame of Nature. His Creation, and every Part of it, is full of him. There is nothing he has made, that is either so distant, so little, or so inconsiderable, which he does not essentially inhabit. His Substance is within the Substance of every Being, whether material, or immaterial, and as intimately present to it, as that Being is to it self. It would by [sic] an Imperfection in him, were he able to remove out of one Place into another, or to withdraw himself from any thing he has created, or from any Part of that Space which is diffused and spread abroad to Infinity. In short, to speak

of him in the Language of the old Philosopher,¹
he is a Being whose Centre is every where, and his
Circumference no where.

Brockes versified a large section of Addison's
Spectator 387 which concerns cheerfulness, a subject
that interests him particularly (II, 592-599). Brockes
placed the English text opposite his translation. The
first part of the essay, which he has not translated,
demonstrates that cheerfulness is good for the health
of the body and for the soul. Brockes starts the
translation with the idea that the world was created for
our pleasure. The ideas coincide with his own.

Those several living Creatures which are made for
our Service or Sustenance, at the same Time either
fill the Woods with their Musick, furnish us with
Game, or raise pleasing Ideas in us by the
Delightfulness of their Appearance.

This becomes

Die Wälder, Felder, Thal und Hügel
Mit mannigfaltger Lieblichkeit,
Sie dienen uns zur Lust, zum Jagen,
Und durch die Schönheit, so sie schmückt,
Erreget sie uns mancherley Behagen.

The original cannot be said to have been enhanced in its
German garb, especially when Brockes translates the word
"Game" by hunting; this brings a disturbing note of

¹This must be Nicholas of Cusa. Henry More uses the
expression in his poem "The Argument of Democritus
Platonissans, or the Infinitie of Worlds," stanza 8
"A circle whose circumference no where/is circumscrib'd,
whose Centre's eache where set...." Brockes' "Gottes
Grösse" (Metzler, p. 534) begins with the words: "Zirckel,
den kein Mensch mit Worten,/Und kein Geist durch Dencken,
misst,/Dessen Mittel aller Orten,/Dessen Umkreis nirgends
ist!" One would expect the word "Mitte" as Brockes means
"centre." The Hamburg edition has "Mittel." "Mittel" also
appears in a version of the poem which was published
anonymously in Der Patriot No. 51, 21st December 1724
before the publication of the poem in Vol. III of Ird. Verg..

cruelty into the harmonious original. Brockes, who loved hunting, was not as sensitive to the pain of animals as many English writers of the period and would be unaware of the discordant note.

The next "Argument for Providence that the whole Earth is covered with Green, rather than with any other Colour" comes from the scientific background.¹ Addison gives the scientific explanation which Brockes succeeds in making somewhat obscure; it concerns the animal spirits

Die Körperlichen Geisterlein,
Die, um zu sehen, stets aus unsern Augen eilen.
Was aber dunkel ist, bewegt die Geister nicht.
Da uns im Gegentheil die Strahlen,
Die unserm Sinn das grüne malen,
In unsrer Augen spiegelnde Crystallen
So wohl gemischt, so sanft gemindert fallen,
Daß sie
Den Geistern, die wir Thierisch nennen
Ein angenehmes Spielwerk gönnen;
Indem durch dieses Gleich-Gewicht,
In welches sie sich stets durch sanften Stoß bewegen,
Sie unserm emsigen Gesicht'
Ein angenehm Gefühl erregen.

The main idea in this essay, that the world is both useful and entertaining, is illustrated by nature's activity in the vegetable world. She is occupied in making the earth gay and beautiful but, at the back of this, is her preoccupation with the useful preservation of the species in the seeds. Brockes condenses and obscures the next point, although it is one which is

¹This is quite a common argument for God's providence. Brockes uses it in his adaptation of Pluche--"Neue Betrachtungen über die Natur des Lichts und der Wärme." McKillop, p. 58 gives the source of Thomson's lines on the same subject--Thomas Robinson, A Vindication of the Philosophical and Theological Exposition of the Mosaick System of the Creation (1709), p. 54.

particularly near his heart. It concerns the pleasure which the senses afford man. Brockes probably did not quite understand the argument, since it was couched in the language of Locke and postulates his views on secondary qualities.¹ Man has been given the power,

Daß jede Sinnlichkeit und Leidenschaft
Durch Farben, Töne, Kält', und Wärm' in uns erreget;
Daß es nur bloß darum geschehen sey,
Damit der Mensch durch süsse Sinnlichkeiten
Derselben sich erfreu.

The universe is compared to a theatre in which the scene is always changing for our entertainment--the succession of day and night, the seasons and the changing face of nature. Quite unaccountably, Brockes concludes his poem at a point which is not really a fitting conclusion. In fact, it is really in the middle of a thought. Addison explains in two paragraphs a) that he does not intend to mention the pleasure of friendship, books and conversation as he is only concerned with delights which are open to all ranks and conditions; and b) (in the second paragraph) that he prefers to dwell on cheerfulness since the English are, in any case, prone to melancholy. In other words, the entire thought of both paragraphs is that Addison prefers to concentrate on the subjects which stimulate cheerfulness and avoid those which produce melancholy. It seems that Brockes once again has not understood the subtleties of the English language and has arbitrarily concluded his poem.

Brockes also versified the Guardian 169 which

¹ John Locke, An Essay concerning Human Understanding, Bk. II, ch. viii.

expresses a similar idea. Fine weather makes us feel exalted. The world is like a theatre with sun, moon, stars, fruit, vegetables providing endless variety for our entertainment.¹ To disregard the course of nature and the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, all of which display the wisdom and power of God, is a "Sort of Impiety."

Addison, who was writing about two decades later than most of the writers of the scientific background, has collected together in his *Spectator* essays many of their ideas and presented them in a more digested form. He was popularizing science, philosophy and theology for his English readers, as Brockes was attempting to do in Germany. In the *Spectator* 543 he discusses the wonder of the body and how new discoveries such as the theory of the circulation of the blood reveal new wonders. The study of the body reveals amazing harmony and order. If we could examine the whole of creation we should discover there the same harmony:

We should see the same concatenation and Subserviency, the same Necessity and Usefulness, the same Beauty and Harmony in all and every of its Parts, as what we discover in the Body of every single Animal.

Addison sees "Demonstrations of a Supreme Being, and of his transcendent Wisdom, Power and Goodness in the

¹Brockes used this idea for his poem "Das herrliche Schauspiel der Natur" (VIII, 170-177, Tübingen; Hamburg, pp. 196 ff.). The actors who perform on the stage are the seasons with their wealth of flowers. Nature preaches to us through flowers which have a special language "In welcher jede, statt der Ohren, mit unsrer Seele, durchs Gesicht, / Auch durchs Gefühl und den Geruch, und also durch drey Sinnen, spricht." This is in keeping with Addison's ideas about the "Entertainments of Sense" which give us joy and "refresh the Soul" (*Spectator* 393).

Formation of the Body of a living Creature." Divine goodness is also exemplified in the idea of plentitude:

...Providence has shewn the Richness of its Goodness and Wisdom, not only in the Production of many Original Species, but in the Multiplicity of Descants which it has made on every Original Species in particular.

From what has been written here and elsewhere about Addison it is clear that he fits into the context of this study completely. Since these writings appeared before Brockes' first volume of Irdisches Vergnügen, Addison could be one of Brockes' sources. Apart from the two poems which were based on Addison with acknowledgement, I have not found any direct borrowings of the kind which would afford absolute proof of Brockes' debt to Addison. They write about the same ideas in the same way, but since such ideas were commonplaces at that time, Brockes could just as easily have found them in some other common sources as in the Spectator.

The contents of this chapter have perhaps not provided interesting reading material but concentration on Brockes' positive literary qualities would have been one-sided and misleading. The fact that Brockes has previously been underrated does not justify a study which attempts to overrate him. Much of this material was also necessary in order to correct many factual errors in circulation.

CHAPTER VIII

BROCKES AS A NATURE POET

It should now be apparent that it is fallacious to call Brockes a nature poet in the sense in which he is generally understood to be one, that is, as a man who sits in his garden and describes flowers and vegetables in great detail. This is to misunderstand the vast field which the conception of nature covers at this period and also to restrict Brockes' work to what is perhaps not its most fruitful aspect.

Until now, we have been dealing with questions which have largely been overlooked in connection with Brockes. The subject of Brockes as a nature poet or as a descriptive poet has received more attention. Otto Janssen's Naturempfindung und Naturgefühl bei Barthold Heinrich Brockes (diss. Bonn, 1907) is concerned with such a subjective and problematic question that one is not surprisingly left with a vague impression about Brockes' aesthetic achievement:

Im Verlaufe dieser Ausführung war es mir nicht so um die Mittel der Brockesischen Naturbetrachtung zu tun, noch um ihr Zusammenwirken zum gegebenen Gedicht, sondern um den Kernpunkt der ästhetischen Naturanschauung: die Verwandlung der die Natur lediglich kopierenden Empfindung in das künstlerische Moment des Naturgefühles. Dieses aber sehen wir bei Brockes, wohl zagend noch, und durch manche Irrtümer verdunkelt, anheben, auf Grund einer neuen die Tradition durchbrechenden, naiven Lust an der Erscheinung.

(pp. 93-94)

This might well have been Janssen's aim but it is

difficult to see how the first two thirds of his thesis contribute to it. In fact, it seems that the idea is only beginning to burgeon in his mind towards the end of his study. Even then, it is not absolutely clear what his conclusion is.

The thesis is overtly concerned with listing the most common themes of the Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott and providing abundant examples. The most common themes are well represented--creation reflects the Creator, nature sings his praises and this is a lesson to man to worship also, the world's usefulness shows that it was created for man's material welfare. Janssen emphasizes Brockes' vivid sense impressions especially his use of colour and movement. The motifs of infinity and of the cosmic journey (he does not use this expression) have been noted. What is lacking is information about the sources and the background of these motifs. Consequently, any comments he makes on them are inadequate. For instance, in connection with the cosmic journey he writes:

Der Sinn vermag für Augenblicke seiner physischen
Gebundenheit zu entraten. Von der Phantasie getragen,
verlässt er seine Herrin, die Seele, aller
Erdschwere ledig, um sich dort zu ergehen, wohin
kein Leib gelangen kann. Ich glaube in diesem Zuge
die Einwirkung Miltons zu erblicken.

(p. 78)

The background of this idea, as we have seen,¹ is much wider than that.

¹Above, pp. 164, 167-168.

As a starting-point for more useful and profound research the thesis is quite useful. The abundant quotations from the Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott enable anyone unacquainted with Brockes to form a picture of the main points of emphasis. Also, behind some of the points which Janssen makes lurk unasked questions which call out for answers. For instance, Janssen finds that Brockes' temperament is very dull:

Aber ungeachtet aller Liebe, die Brockes der schöpferischen Natur entgegenbringt, Temperament werden wir nicht zu eifrig bei ihm suchen dürfen.

Brockes travelled widely:

Fragen wir uns nach dem Eindruck, den er vor alledem empfangen hat, so geraten wir billig in Erstaunen. In Ungarn haben die grossen Kürbisse sein Gefallen erregt, von Venedig weiss er nichts anderes zu sagen, als dass ihm das Geld ausgegangen ist. Er überschreitet die Alpen und verrät ein höchst primitives Empfinden für die Schönheiten der Gebirgswelt.

(p. 9-10)

Yet Janssen talks of the vitality of Brockes' imagery, the exploitation of movement and the reflection of feeling, and does not see in this a contradiction which requires an explanation.

What Janssen claims to be his thesis is also more of a starting-point for further research than a conclusive contribution to our knowledge about Brockes. To begin with, it is, as I have said, rather difficult to find. As far as I understand, it seems to develop only towards the end of the dissertation out of some rather negative judgments which Janssen makes on Brockes' poetry. These are mainly connected with Brockes' treatment of colour

and movement.

Janssen notes the way in which Brockes uses gems as metaphors in his attempt to render the colours of the objects which he is observing.

Die Phantasie, mit einförmigen Metaphern gespeist,
gerät ins Stocken: wird auch der Eindruck der
Intensität in Spannung erhalten, die lebendige
stets variierende Natur geht dabei zugrunde.
(p. 16)

He concedes that Brockes, while belonging to the earlier tradition (Baroque),¹ goes beyond it:

In diesem Abstrahieren vom Gegenstande verrät sich
noch die Einwirkung der Tradition.
(p. 25)

The following observations are nevertheless very negative and seem to censure Brockes for escaping into abstraction in his treatment of colour instead of abiding by objective reality:

Eine koloristisch gedachte Illusion ist erreicht,
aber die unglaubliche Steigerung der Effekte und die
damit verbundene Ablösung des Farbenscheines von
aller sinnlichen Konkretion hat den Dichter auf
Formgebung verzichten lassen. Wie geringwertig die
Wirkung solcher, in krassester Buntheit erregter
Farbenkomplexe ist, muss ohne weiteres einleuchten...
Trotzdem lässt Brockes--und darin reicht er über seine
Zeit hinaus--seine Poesie stets mit dem beobachteten
Vorgange anheben; aber alle Wirklichkeitsdichtung will
nichts bedeuten, wenn das Unwahre in der Art der
Betrachtung liegt.
(p. 21)

The same conclusion is reached when Janssen considers Brockes' treatment of movement in his poems. He observes that Brockes walks around and changes his

¹This question is discussed in detail in Harry W. Pfund, Studien zu Wort und Stil bei Brockes (New York, 1935).

point of view when he is writing a descriptive poem.

Das macht einen der wesentlichen Momente der künstlerisch noch unvollendeten Naturbetrachtung aus. Man ist oft genötigt, das einheitliche Bild aus der Fülle der Situationen zu erraten.

(p. 23)

At this stage it is not clear whether Janssen considers this to be positive or negative, since some of his remarks are quite neutral. He writes:

Brockes verschafft seinen Lesern einen unbequemen Genuss, indem er die Phantasie, die er wachrufen will, durch ein stetes Umschweifen der Dinge erschöpft.

(p. 23)

In the latter part of the thesis a more positive note enters. This confusion of sense impressions, in which Brockes loses himself and also loses touch with the object, leads him to his inner sensations:

Die Wollust der Empfindung verführt den Dichter fort von dem Objekt, auf die Erlebnisse der inneren Wahrnehmung, in der er Grund und Quelle jeden Genusses zu erblicken glaubt.

(p. 67)

In such passages Janssen begins to approach the ideas he claims to be analysing ("Kernpunkt der ästhetischen Anschauung") although the analysis is far from profound.

In the aesthetic experience the activity of the creative mind is projected into the world of nature:

Mussten wir oben eingestehen, dass die Gestalt der Dinge in dem Wirbel farbiger Erregungen zerstört wird, so erkannten wir zugleich, wie energisch sich der Trieb geltend macht, den empfangenen Eindruck zu beleben. Schon während wir die Intensität des Farbigen betrachteten, machte sich die Regung des starren Scheines bemerkbar.--Wo sich nun der Blick von dieser illusorischen Erregung auf die reale der umgebenden Natur richtet, da erfüllt sich die Welt augenblicklich mit einer Unzahl

belebter Geschöpfe, in denen wir, kraft unserer Illusion eine gleichgestimmte Beseeltheit vermuten. Auch an unserem Dichter wird sich erweisen, wie zumal in der bewegten Natur der Urgrund jener Selbstversetzung zu finden ist, die sich in aller ästhetischen Betrachtung enthüllt.--Der ästhetisch Gestimmte ist jederzeit in dem Wahne befangen, in der Natur selbst den sinnvollen Inhalt anzutreffen, den er doch selbst unbefangen in sie hineinlegte. So wird er zum Zuschauer einer Handlung, die er selbst agiert. Weiterhin sehen wir, wie sich die eigene Persönlichkeit, in dem ganzen Umfange ihrer sinnund zweckvollen Bestimmungen in die umgebende Natur überträgt.

(p. 59)

Another passage deals with the question of "Stimmung" which Janssen says is new in German literature:

Lassen sich die Bewegungen und dynamischen Veränderungen in der Natur als affektgeleitete Gebärden deuten, so verwandelt die ruhende Natur diesen Ausdruck der Gebärde in den der Stimmung. Erschauen wir aus der Veränderung, wie aus einer deutlich vernehmbaren Sprache, den beseelten Sinn der Welt, so müssen wir aus der unerregten, durch keinerlei Gebärde verständlichen Natur ihr Wesen erraten. Ich halte dafür, dass dem siebzehnten Jahrhundert die „Stimmung“ in diesem einschränkenden Sinne noch fast fremd war, und dass dort, wo Brockes versucht auch dieser Sensation teilhaftig zu werden, er sich über das Niveau seiner Zeit, wenigstens in Deutschland, beträchtlich erhebt.

(p. 74)

This passage is not particularly enlightening. What Janssen understands by "Stimmung" and "Beseeltheit" is not clear. The creative process is in the last resort a mystery. To what extent Nature has a soul or character to express or whether it is merely a mirror or man's inner psychical processes are futile questions to ask or even to suggest. Janssen talks quite happily of the transformation of dynamic effects into atmosphere (Stimmung) without making it clear what he means by this

and how the change takes place.

I do not claim to solve such intangible problems, but think nevertheless that it is possible to throw more light on the dynamism of Brockes' poetry than Janssen has been able to do, if we start with what is tangible, that is, the text and the background and see how far such knowledge will stretch. This last passage which I have quoted from Janssen follows a section which gives quotations from poems on storms, fire, mountains and water, poems which I have discussed in connection with Virgil and Burnet. The context therefore is that of the sublime.

In such poems Brockes was seen to leave his harmonious world of goodness and utility for one which was discordant in a sense, since it was characterized by a certain amount of ugliness and terror. He did this, as his like-minded contemporaries in England did, because he was fascinated by the manifestation of energy and power and the novel mixed feelings which it aroused--the sublime.

The poem on the storm which I discussed in connection with the literary background and Virgil is also an example of the sublime. Brockes reports the storm in the third person as if it were a true account of an actual storm but certain lapses from verisimilitude soon make it clear that it is a product of Brockes' imagination. The point of departure is a storm which Brockes has at some time experienced, but as he progresses

he seems to abstract all the fiercest and most turbulent elements from all the storms which he has ever seen or read about, and build them into this poem. These impressions are intensified by a wealth of onomatopoeia which shatters the eardrums of the imagination. After the clash of thunder, the flashes of lightning and the roar of the cloudburst and rushing water, the mountains reel, the earth trembles, the black air is torn asunder like gaping jaws "Voll Flammen, Dampf und Gluht, ja eine Höllen=Gruft..." (Metzler, p. 274). It is easy to follow the flight of Brockes' imagination into an unreality which does not seem to present any conflict for him, when in the same poem, he brings us back to the world after the storm--a world which is equally unreal--to peasants whose cottages and lives have miraculously survived a storm resembling the end of the world. The reason for this is the interest in the sublime and all that it entails, especially as a manifestation of God's might and power.

In another poem "Gesang zur Zeit des Ungewitters" (Metzler, pp. 277-280), Brockes uses the same storm themes to emphasize God's presence in the elements:

Dräut gleich der Grund der Welt zu wancken, zu
vergehen,
Lässt die geborst'ne Welt gleich nichts, als Flammen,
sehen
Rauscht gleich der Winde Wuth, netzt gleich ein Regen=
Schwall
Das überströmte Land mit Wassern überall.

The elements praise God, and God manifests himself in the elements:

So zittert, blitzt und rauscht doch alles, Gott zu
Ehren,
Er lasset seine Stimm', im Donner, gleichsam hören,
Er zeigt seine Kraft und seine Lieb', es bricht,
Selbst durch den lichten Blitz, des Schöpfers
Weisheits=Licht.

In such poems Brockes takes a subject which is real enough but goes beyond reality by a series of variations on that subject. His motive is the interest in the sublime. The same observations apply to his otherwise unaccountable use of motifs from Burnet's ugly world which we have discussed at length in chapter VI. The exaggerated vocabulary of horror in Burnet belongs to the background of a man with an aesthetic ideal of harmony and symmetry, who is shocked by the sight of a world which conflicts with this ideal. The language with which he expresses his impressions of ugliness becomes for Brockes the language of the sublime. It expresses the fascination of the vast and terrifying, new emotional and irrational experiences. Brockes takes these motifs, orchestrates them by means of imaginary visual and aural effects, variations and repetitions.

Burnet's imagination is very vivid but it is harnessed to an apocalyptic vision of the final conflagration. Brockes is again fascinated by the violent imagery of a world in turmoil in the process of being consumed by the ferocity of fire. His treatment is the same as for the motifs of the storm and the mountains. He varies and repeats, adds sound and movement and feelings of fear and terror.

When we view these poems in their literary setting

and against the background of the sublime, our understanding of them is increased considerably. Janssen's vague ideas of "Stimmung" and "Beseeltheit" have little to contribute. Moreover, since he claims to be considering aesthetic issues, contemporary aesthetics would surely be more relevant to the eighteenth century than ideas from a later period. We have already seen how the earlier ideas of Dennis develop into the aesthetics of the sublime, and how useful it was to apply this to Brockes' activity. Addison's ideas in the Spectator essays known as "The Pleasures of the Imagination" seem to me to have much to contribute to the present discussion.

These essays have already been referred to in connection with theories of the sublime which is an important part of eighteenth-century aesthetics. A leading idea is that literature is not a photographic representation of objective reality; it must appeal to the imagination.¹ Imagination heightens reality:

Words, when well chosen, have so great a Force in them, that a Description often gives us more lively Ideas than the Sight of Things themselves. The Reader finds a Scene drawn in Stronger Colours, and painted more to the Life in his Imagination, by the help of Words, than by an actual Survey of the Scene which they

¹ Johann Jacob Bodmer was also influenced by Addison's essays on the imagination. He writes in Johann Miltons Episches Gedicht von dem Verlohrnen Paradiëse (Zürich, 1742), Bk. I, pp. 12ff.: "Die Poesie kummert sich eigentlich nicht um das Wahre des Verstandes; es ist ihr nur um die Besiegung der Phantasie zu thun; darum begnüget sie sich nur an dem Wahrscheinlichen, welches auf das Zeugniß der Sinnen und der Phantasie gegründet ist."

describe. In this case the Poet seems to get the better of Nature; he takes, indeed, the Landscip after her, but gives it more vigorous Touches, heightens its Beauty, and so enlivens the whole Piece, that the Images which flow from the Objects themselves appear weak and faint, in Comparison of those that come from the Expressions. (Spectator 416)

Addison's remarks apply to all those descriptive poems which Janssen had in the earlier part of his thesis considered to be a departure from reality, those belonging to the above category of dynamic poems, and others which describe "Das Wogen der Meereswellen, den Wirbel der Schneeflocken, der fallenden Blüten, der Tautropfen, das ganze Gewirre der vom Winde getriebenen Kleinwelt" (p. 56). Brockes is really attempting description:

Wir erkennen hier, wie der Dichter, ehrlich bestrebt ist, nachzuahmen, auch auf die Gefahr hin, den anschaulichen Eindruck zu vernichten.
(p. 57)

This remark follows the description of a snowstorm.

Immediately before that Janssen expresses a similar idea:

Ich hoffe deutlich zu machen, worin sich auch hier der eigentümliche Charakter der Brockesischen Dichtung bezeugt. Vergass er über der heftigen Erregung des Farbensinnes den Hinweis auf das Objekt, dem das Koloristische eigen ist, so vergisst er das gleiche über der Freude am bewegten Sinnenschein. Bis ins Subtilste folgt er der Dynamik der Natur, selbst über das Anschauliche hinaus.
(p. 56)

To illustrate these ideas Janssen quotes part of a poem on a snow flurry (Schneegestöber):¹

¹This is quoted by Janssen, pp. 56-57, but I am quoting it from the Tübingen edition, VII, 561-563; the Hamburg reference is VII, 598. Janssen's quotations throughout his work are very inaccurate. He makes no attempt to indicate the verse form. In this particular quotation he has missed out two lines.

Es zirkelten die Wirbel=Winde
Den Schnee, wie einen weissen Rauch,
Sie rissen, recht als einen Schmauch,
Der Lüfte Schaum so heftig, so geschwinde,
Auf eine sonst nicht leicht geschehne Weise,
In langen Strichen bald, und bald im Kreise,
Von allen Orten her, nach allen Orten hin,
Von oben, unterwärts, von unten über sich.
Hier floß ein weisser Strohm, dort schoß ein strenger
Strich,

Durch einen andern hin.
Was in dem Augenblick den Gegner preßte, wich
Im Augenblick zurück, von ihm gedrengt. Es schien
Sich alles in der Luft zu jagen und zu fliehn.
Eh' jedes Stäubchen Schnee den Grund,
Worauf es doch nicht ruhen kunt,
Wie sehr es ihn gesucht, berühret;
War es viel hundertmal vorher empor geführt,
Gesenkt, erhöht, gestürzt, und in die Höh' gerissen,
Und hatte tausendfach sich drehen lassen müssen.
Zuweilen stürzt und fiel ein Meer von Schnee so dicht,
So dick von oben ab, es schien fast dem Gesicht
Ein Wolken=Bruch von Schnee, es schien die ganze Luft
Ein ungetrennter Dampf, ein weisser Nebel=Duft.
So heftig war das heftige Bewegen:
Für grosser Schnelligkeit schien sich fast nichts zu
regen,
Bis hie und da von Sturm getroffene Theile,
In noch vermehrter Eile,
In sichtbarn Linien noch heftiger gedrungen,
Mit größrer Wut sich durch die andern schwungen,
Und da sie sich bald hie, bald dorthin neigten,
Die heftige Bewegung deutlich zeigten.

This description seems to me to show Brockes' observation and the pleasure which his imagination takes in movement. He attempts to bring out the initial experience by a series of variations of images--ein weißer Strom, weißer Rauch, ein strenger Strich, Schmauch, Schaum, Stäubchen, sichtbare Linien. He tries to capture the movement by referring to the constantly changing view-point--von allen Orten her, nach allen Orten hin, von oben unterwärts, von unten über sich, hier, dort, hie und da.

In the poem "Der Winter" (Metzler, pp. 441-454)

there is another snow description. The technique is the same. Brockes has the same picture in his mind of streaks and lines:

Bald gleicht der kleine Schnee, mit Hagel untermengt,
Wann ihn der wilde Nord mit strengem Blasen drengt,
Und Strich=weis' auf uns treibt, geschärften langen
Spiessen.

Die Wolcken scheinen uns mit Pfeilen zu beschiessen...

He describes the movement of the snowflakes:

Es scheint die gantze Luft zu leben,
Es scheinen lichte Theil' herab zu schweben,
Und durch einander her zu gehn.

They fall like feathers, glimmer and shine, but viewed
from below they seem to be black,

Da doch, so bald er auf der Erden,
Nichts weissers kann gefunden werden.

Brockes varies the degree of movement from the gentle to
the wild:

Itzt schwärmt das luckre Heer der Flocken hin und
wieder;
Steigt spielend in die Höh; fällt schertzend wieder
nieder,
Weil noch die Stille währt.
Bald kömmt, mit frischer Wuth,
Ein Schnee=Staub unversehns, wie eine weisse Fluth,
Vom Boreas gejagt, von neuem zugeschossen;
Da kämpfet Sturm mit Sturm, da streiten Schnee und
Schlossen.

This love of movement is part of the taste of
those who belong to the same background. Thomson's
poetry is also full of movement. Addison, after
explaining that one of the sources of the pleasures of
the imagination is the sight of what is new, writes:

For this Reason there is nothing that more enlivens
a Prospect than Rivers, Jetteaus, or Falls of Water,
where the Scene is perpetually shifting, and
entertaining the Sight every Moment with something
that is new. We are quickly tired with looking upon
Hills and Vallies, where every thing continues fixt

and settled in the same Place and Posture, but
find our Thoughts a little agitated and relieved
at the Sight of such Objects as are ever in Motion,
and sliding away from beneath the Eye of the Beholder.
(Spectator 412)

Our understanding of Brockes' colour imagery increases when we consider it in its contemporary context. The influence of Newton's theories of light has already been discussed.¹ They apply also to the present discussion. In some poems we can almost see how Brockes applies Newton's ideas, as he abstracts light from objects. In the poem "Das Feuer" (Metzler, pp. 484-530) Brockes discusses the prism. Colour is nothing but refracted light. This conditions his vision of things and subsequently his descriptions also.

Gleichfalls weist der Regen=Bogen
Und der Lüfte heitres Blau,
Der bewölckten Wasser=Wogen
Purpur, Silber, Gelb und Grau,
Samt der Wolcken bunten Bildern,
Daß sie nur mit Licht sich schildern,
Daß die Farben nichts, als Licht,
So sich unterschiedlich bricht.
(Stanza 26)

Seine kleinen runden Theile
Drehn und ändern sich so leicht,
Daß es nemlich oft in Eile
Sich auf alle Farben zeucht.
Denn, wenn es durch Cörper strahlet,
Die gefärbet und bemalet,
(Als ein Vorhang und ein Glas)
Wirds oft blau, oft roth, oft blaß.
(Stanza 27)

¹Above, pp. 112ff. Brockes would also have assimilated some ideas on this subject while translating Genest's Principes de philosophie. The section "Des Couleurs," Ird. Verg. III, 382-398 is particularly relevant. Genest discusses the prism on page 386.

The next stanzas of this poem give examples of the relativity of light. Then follow numerous stanzas in which one can study once again how various objects are affected by the refraction of light.

Was da leb't, und was nicht lebet,
Alles, Thiere, Holtz und Stein,
Ist so wunderbar gewebet,
Daß, so bald des Lichtes Schein
Ihrer Flächen Aeussers rühret,
Man nicht ohn' Vergnügen spühret,
Wie's in mancherley Gestalt,
Die man Farb' heisst, rückwärts prallt.
(Stanza 30)

Denn, nachdem die Körper dichte,
Rauh und glatt sind, hart und weich,
Scheinen sie auch dem Gesichte
Schwartz entweder, oder bleich.
Ist ein Körper rauh und feste;
Treiben seine Theil' und Aeste
Des empfund'nen Lichtes Blick
Ungetrennt und weiß zurück.
(Stanza 31)

Other stanzas of equal interest follow. An interesting study could be made of the application of such stanzas to Brockes' colour imagery in the more descriptive poems. One example is sufficient. The poem "Schönheit der zur Abend=Zeit hinter einem Gebüsche hervorstrahlenden Sonne" (Metzler, pp. 291-293) is a descriptive poem as the title suggests. The opening lines confirm this:

Ey sehet! seht doch dort um GOTTes willen
Die güld'ne Gluht, den Rosen=farb'nen Glantz,
Die dort des Waldes Nacht, und grüne Schatten gantz,
Mit einer himmlischen, nicht ird'schen Schönheit,
füllen!

Most of the poem is a symphony of colour variations in the manner in which Brockes orchestrates his sense impressions.

Es scheinen sich zu gatten
Das Gläntzen von Smaragd, von Gold und von Rubin.
Man glaubt ein grünes Feuer, wodurch die Lüfte glüh'n,

Drauf erzeugt dein Glantz und bildet
Farben, Morgenröth' und Thau;
Malt, bepurpert und vergüldet
Das gemischte Silber=Grau:
Und der Himmel scheint ein Schleyer,
Der aus Rosen, Gold und Feuer
(Von der Luft Sapphir bezirckt)
Wunderbarlich schön gewirckt.
(Die Sonne, stanza 7)

The common motif of the antithesis of light and shadow and of the sun expelling the darkness is also associated with these ideas:

Wenn dein noch entferntes Gläntzen
Durch den finstern Abgrund dringt,
Und der Strahlen äuss're Grentzen
(Draus die Dämmerung entspringt)
Sich mit Luft und Dunckel gatten:
Dann versilberst du die Schatten;
Dann erheitert deine Pracht
Das Stockfinstre Schwartz der Nacht.

Brockes' delight in colours is not determined by scientific considerations alone. Addison's aesthetic ideas have a part to play. Addison is talking about beauties which please us:

Among these several kinds of Beauty the Eye takes most Delight in Colours. We no where meet with a more glorious or pleasing Show in Nature, than what appears in the Heavens at the rising and setting of the Sun, which is wholly made up of those different Stains of Light that shew themselves in Clouds of a different Situation. For this Reason we find the Poets, who are always addressing themselves to the Imagination, borrowing more of their Epithets from Colours than from any other Topic.

(Spectator 412)

The more we consider Brockes' treatment of sense impressions the more we are reminded of the Essay concerning Human Understanding in which John Locke presents his theories of perception. The following passage actually reminds us of lines from some of Brockes' poems:

Let us consider the red and white colours in porphyry: hinder light but from striking on it, and its colours vanish; it no longer produces any such ideas in us. Upon the return of light, it produces these appearances on us again. Can any one think any real alterations are made in the porphyry by the presence or absence of light, and that those ideas of whiteness and redness are really in porphyry in the light, when it is plain it has no colour in the dark? It has indeed such a configuration of particles, both night and day, as are apt, by the rays of light rebounding from some parts of that hard stone, to produce in us the idea of redness, and from others the idea of whiteness: but whiteness or redness are not in it at any time, but such a texture that hath the power to produce such a sensation in us.¹

Locke's ideas about primary and secondary qualities are also relevant. Locke distinguishes between "the qualities in bodies and the ideas produced by them in the mind." Solidity, extension, figure, number, and motion or rest Locke calls primary or real qualities and these are actually in the bodies. Secondary and imputed qualities are

Such qualities, which in truth are nothing in the objects themselves, but powers to produce various sensations in us by their primary qualities, i.e., by the bulk, figure, texture, and motion of their insensible parts, as colours, sounds, tastes, etc. ...
(Bk. II, Ch. VIII)

Addison gives an example of how Locke's ideas serve his aesthetic purposes. He tells us how God has made the "whole Creation more gay and delightful":

He has given almost every thing about us the Power of raising an agreeable Idea in the Imagination: so that it is impossible for us to behold his Works with Coldness or Indifference, and to survey so many Beauties without a secret Satisfaction and

¹ John Locke, An Essay concerning Human Understanding, ed. A. S. Pringle-Pattison (Oxford, 1934), Bk. II, ch. viii.

Complacency. Things would make but a poor Appearance to the Eye, if we saw them only in their proper Figures and Motions: And what Reason can we assign for their exciting in us many of those Ideas which are different from any thing that exists in the Objects themselves, (for such are Light and Colours) were it not to add Supernumerary Ornaments to the Universe, and make it more agreeable to the Imagination? We are every where entertained with pleasing Shows and Apparitions, we discover imaginary Glories in the Heavens, and in the Earth, and see some of this Visionary Beauty poured out upon the whole Creation; but what a rough unsightly Sketch of Nature should we be entertained with, did all her Colouring disappear, and the several Distinctions of Light and Shade vanish? In short, our Souls are at present delightfully lost and bewildered in a pleasing Delusion, and we walk about like the Enchanted Hero in a Romance, who sees beautiful Castles, Woods and Meadows; and at the same time hears the warbling of Birds, and the purling of Streams... I have here supposed that my Reader is acquainted with that great Modern Discovery, which is at present universally acknowledged by all the Enquirers into Natural Philosophy: Namely, that Light and Colours, as apprehended by the Imagination, are only Ideas in the Mind, and not Qualities that have any Existence in Matter. As this is a Truth which has been proved incontestably by many Modern Philosophers, and is indeed one of the finest Speculations in that Science, if the English Reader would see the Notion explained at large, he may find it in the Eighth Chapter of the second Book of Mr. Lock's Essay on Human Understanding.

(Spectator 413)

Addison has here adapted Locke's philosophical ideas to his own doctrine of pleasure through the imagination which, in turn, harmonizes completely with Brockes' attitude. The result is a view of literature as a product of the creative imagination rather than as an attempt to copy objective reality with accuracy. These issues seem to me to be more relevant to a study of Brockes' poetry than an attempt to find in it some kind of pseudo-romanticism. The poet in fact is not restricted to reality at all, but can use it for his

own creative purposes and mould it as he pleases:

In a Word, he has the modelling of Nature in his own Hands, and may give her what Charms he pleases, provided he does not reform her too much, and run into Absurdities, by endeavouring to excel.

He has poetic licence:

His Rose-trees, Wood-bines and Jessamines may flower together, and his Beds be covered at the same time with Lilies, Violets, and Amaranths.

This is because Addison thinks that the imagination has the power to heighten and perfect reality:

But because the Mind of Man requires something more perfect in Matter, than what it finds there, and can never meet with any Sight in Nature which sufficiently answers its highest Ideas of Pleasantness; or, in other Words, because the Imagination can fancy to it self Things more Great, Strange, or Beautiful, than the Eye ever saw, and is still sensible of some Defect in what it has seen; on this account it is the part of a Poet to humour the Imagination in its own Notions, by mending and perfecting Nature where he describes a Reality, and by adding greater Beauties than are put together in Nature where he describes a Fiction.

(Spectator 418)

Paul van Tieghem, who has studied eighteenth-century nature poetry in Europe, finds that Brockes is the forerunner. Brockes' name heads the list of those who have brought the subject of external nature into western literature.¹ The first chapter of the Sentiment de la Nature called "Les poèmes descriptifs. Les débuts. Brockes" devotes five pages to Brockes. In the next chapter there are six pages on Thomson and several others on the reception of The Seasons in Europe. Thomson had previously been by critics regarded as a more important

¹Le sentiment de la Nature dans le Prérromantisme Européen (Paris, 1960), p. 265.

poet than Brockes in the development of nature poetry.¹

Van Tieghem's book covers the whole of western literature in the eighteenth century and is divided into three parts--"la littérature descriptive," "les aspects de la nature," and "les sentiments et les idées." Individual chapters are devoted to literary themes--the seasons, sky and stars, the countryside, forest, mountains and the sea. The fact that there are references to Brockes' poetry in most of these sections shows that Van Tieghem has realized how wide Brockes' range is. It is, as we shall see, much wider than he indicates.

Le sentiment de la Nature would be more useful if it were more scholarly. Its enormous scope excuses much of the superficiality. Van Tieghem very seldom gives references for the passages which he quotes. This is particularly grave in the case of prolific writers like Brockes, where it is difficult to find the relevant poem. One feels, unfortunately, that it is necessary to check the references, since van Tieghem frequently makes sweeping statements. He also tends to accept the statements of others somewhat uncritically. There is no evidence to support the following view:

A partir de 1728, ce ton prêcheur envahit même ses effusions lyrique [sic]. De là vient qu'il n'a pas continué à jouer dans le développement européen du mouvement que nous étudions le rôle de premier ordre qui lui paraissait dévolu.

(p. 15)

¹Max Koch, Über die Beziehungen der englischen Literatur zur deutschen im 18. Jahrhundert (1883). "Nicht als Zufall möchte ich es ansehen, daß gerade Thomsons Seasons, das Gedicht, mit dessen Einfluß in Deutschland die Rückkehr zur Natur beginnt..." Such unscholarly statements did much to spread this view. Van Tieghem's book shows that Brockes was first in the field of nature poetry.

One wonders also how applicable to Brockes the following statement really is: "Brockes innove en unissant l'observation du naturaliste à l'inspiration luthérienne déjà animée de l'esprit des 'lumières'" (p. 15).

However, van Tieghem does not accept unconditionally Strauß's view that Brockes' poetry was versified physico-theology:

De ce long ouvrage, David Friedrich Strauß disait: "C'est l'argument physico-théologique de l'existence de Dieu mis en vers;" avec, de plus un finalisme d'une extrême et naïve simplicité. Mais cette conception, en cherchant dans toute la nature les preuves de la bonté de la Providence, avait l'inappréciable avantage de rendre l'auteur attentif aux formes, aux couleurs du monde inanimé comme des êtres vivants, afin de surprendre dans les plus infimes détails de leur structure ou de leurs fonctions des preuves toujours nouvelles de l'ingéniosité et de la bonté du suprême Artisan. (p. 15)

After noting that Brockes' interest in physico-theology renders him more aware of the forms and colours of the external world, van Tieghem does not go any further, and misses the important role which science and theology plays in Brockes' work.

The concluding sentence of the section on Brockes reflects what van Tieghem considers important:

Aujourd'hui, après deux siècles écoulés et après avoir entendu tant de meilleurs poètes dire à l'envi leurs sensations et leur émotions devant la beauté du monde, quand on a passé des heures et des jours à lire cette masse démesurée et confuse de vers souvent médiocres dans les huit gros volumes des éditions originales, on se sent encore touché de la ferveur naïve du bon Hambourgeois, de la fraîcheur intarissable et de la sincérité de ses impressions, de sa tendresse pour tout ce qui vit sous le ciel; on admire ces deux qualités qui n'ont jamais été égalées: la justesse minutieuse de son observation et

l'inépuisable richesse de sa langue descriptive.
(p. 18)

When we consider how negative earlier critics have been about Brockes, such high praise of his accurate power of observation and rich descriptive language shows a considerable change in attitude.

Van Tieghem sees Brockes as the type of nature poet who sits in his garden and meticulously describes each flower "avec la précision minutieuse de l'atomiste," a view which I have shown to be too restricted. One feels that he has not read a large number of poems, especially those which we have discussed in connection with the sublime:

Les tableaux que peint infatigablement ce miniaturiste sont rarement empruntés à la nature irrégulière et sauvage; il ne se plaît que dans les plaines bien cultivées, les prairies aimables, verdoyantes, les pentes douces de collines moyennes. Quoiqu'il eût sous les yeux le large estuaire de l'Elbe ou la Mer du Nord avec ses tempêtes, les forces naturelles sont rarement pour lui puissantes ou terribles.

(p. 16)

This is simply not true. We have already discussed Brockes' storm poems¹ and seen how terrible and powerful natural forces become under his pen.

Later in the book van Tieghem discusses poems on storms in relation to the question of sense impressions:

La nature offre souvent des phénomènes qui intéressent à la fois plusieurs sens; l'art de l'écrivain consiste à suggérer à la fois les impressions diverses qu'ils font éprouver. Seuls y ont réussi quelques maîtres de la description: Brockes parfois, mais il est trop minutieux, trop analyste pour donner une impression d'ensemble qui soit saisissante...

(pp. 118-119)

¹Above, pp. 132-135.

Van Tieghem then gives a few examples of storm poems including one from the Seasons which we have already discussed. Brockes' storm poems are not mentioned. If van Tieghem had read them, then it is difficult to see why they were rejected according to the above criteria. Brockes' use of sense impressions, especially in the storm poems, is perhaps unprecedented. It is perhaps true that one of them "Die auf ein starckes Ungewitter erfolgte Stille" (Metzler, pp. 270-276) lacks unity but this is not on account of excessive analysis but, as we have seen, because Brockes was combining two heterogeneous worlds, that of the wild and disorderly and that of the ideally harmonious.

Van Tieghem's treatment of the subject of Brockes and mountain scenery is also inadequate:

Il est parfois question des montagnes dans les vers des Hambourgeois Brockes et Hagedorn, qui ne les ont pas vues, mais qui en ont la notion purement livresque du XVII^e siècle.
(p. 160)

Brockes had crossed the Alps on his way to Italy. Janssen writes of this: „Er überschreitet die Alpen und verrät ein höchst primitives Empfinden für die Schönheiten der Gebirgswelt.“¹ He does not give the source nor does he give any further explanation. It is perhaps true of the poem "Die Berge" that the attitude to mountains is derived from books rather than from observation, but for reasons which van Tieghem has not noted. He comments on the elements of horror and utility

¹Janssen, op. cit., p. 9.

and adds "pas un mot sur leurs beautés" (p. 160). But Brockes finds mountains beautiful in two different ways.¹ "Die Höhen dieser Welt, der Berg' erhab'ne Gipfel" bathed in the early morning sunrise have a calm beauty about them. The "ugly" mountains of the poem "Die Berge" are "ungeheuer schön,/Daß sie uns zugleich ergetzen,/Und auch in Erstaunen setzen." This is the beauty of the sublime, full of terror and delight, which perhaps should not be called "beauty." The word "sublime" is more appropriate. Brockes' mountain poems give unique examples. Van Tieghem, after pointing out the negative attitude to mountains in the seventeenth century, does not see a significant change until the middle of the eighteenth century:

Les recherches les plus attentives ont établi que, en Allemagne comme en France, il faut attendre au moins le milieu du siècle pour rencontrer des témoignages probants de quelque sentiment de la montagne.

(p. 160)

He admits that some interest in mountains is stirring in England earlier than that:

Addison dans une de ses Lettres d'Italie en vers (1701), John Philips dans son poème Le Cidre (1706), témoignent les premiers d'une sincère admiration pour les montagnes en général, sans rien préciser.

(p. 159)

But van Tieghem had apparently not been able to read Marjorie Nicolson's Mountain Gloom and Mountain Glory which was published the year before his own book.¹

¹ Clarence Thorpe, "Two Augustans Cross the Alps: Dennis and Addison on Mountain Scenery," Studies in Philology, XXXII (1935), 463-482 also shows that van Tieghem's ideas on this subject are incorrect.

Van Tieghem would, I am sure, agree with me that the following passage from Flaubert's Madame Bovary is a typical example of his "sentiment de la nature" fully developed:

--Vous devez avoir de fort belles promenades dans les environs? continuait Emma, qui, tournant le dos à M. Homais, parlait de trois quarts à M. Léon.

--Oui, répondit-il, je les connais peu. Il y a un endroit que l'on nomme la Pâturage, au haut de la côte Saint-Jean, sous le bois. On domine de là toute la prairie, pleine de bestiaux, et les sinuosités de la rivière, bordée de saules. Souvent, le dimanche, l'après-midi, je vais là m'asseoir, à regarder les couchers de soleil.

--Quelle admirable chose, reprit Emma, que les soleils couchants dans la campagne, à l'automne. Mais je ne les aime guère que sur la mer. J'adore la mer. Tout semble petit à côté de cette immensité, l'esprit vogue si librement sur cette immensité, ces spectacles sublimes vous élèvent l'âme, et donnent des idées d'infini, d'idéal!

--Il en est de même des paysages de montagnes, reprit Léon.

--Vous en avez vu? fit-elle.

--Non, répondit-il, mais j'ai un cousin qui a voyagé en Suisse l'année dernière, et qui me disait qu'on ne peut pas se figurer le grandiose de cette nature-là, la poésie des cascades, le charme des lacs, et l'effet vraiment prodigieux des glaciers. On voit des pins fracassés d'une grandeur incroyable, tout en travers des torrents pour servir de ponts, des cabanes, comme des bouquets de fleurs, suspendues sur des abîmes, à mille pieds sous vous, des vallées entières, quand les nuages s'entr'ouvrent. Oh! comme cette nature vierge doit exciter l'imagination, faire battre le cœur, doubler votre être, disposer enfin à la prière, à l'extase!

The elements of this feeling are the sunset by the sea, the sea itself, lakes, waterfalls, tall pines, huge glaciers, valleys and so forth. The thoughts which the sea provokes are of the infinite which elevates the soul. Mountain scenes stimulate enthusiasm, prayer and ecstasy. If we turn back to the discussion of the sublime in

¹Gustave Flaubert, Madame Bovary, eds. Jean Pommier and Gabrielle Leleu (Paris, 1949), p. 254.

chapter VI, we note not only the same subjects described in extracts from Shaftesbury, Addison and Brockes but the same emotional reaction--the uplifting of the soul, enthusiasm, thoughts of God. In fact, some of the examples quoted earlier were even more interesting than this one from the nineteenth century, because of the complexity of mixed emotions of an irrational and almost paradoxical nature. Since this aspect of Brockes' work seems to me to lead directly to later literary developments, I consider it to be most important.

Van Tieghem has overlooked Brockes' important exploitation of the sublime, as have other critics. Janssen at least noticed Brockes' interest in manifestations of energy and vital movement. Van Tieghem seems at times even to ignore this. His remark about Brockes' treatment of storms and mountains shows his limitations on this subject, but there are other examples in his chapters on "Le ciel et les astres" and "La campagne."

I have shown, in earlier chapters, the context of Brockes' cosmic poems--Platonism and the new science (sometimes simplified as the "Copernican revolution"). Such are the basic elements of the sublime. Van Tieghem realizes that Brockes deals with the subject of the immensity of the universe:

Dans sa Contemplation du Ciel (1736), Brockes exprime un anéantissement qui n'est pas sans jouissance, et dont l'âme se repaît (Seelenweide). Ce vertige métaphysique est très rare chez lui; on ne le rencontre guère d'ailleurs qu'au siècle suivant.

(p. 124)

But this "vertige de la pensée" (p. 251) is not a rare or isolated idea in Brockes' poetry. It recurs again and again.¹ I have already given several examples which range from the intellectual to the more emotional experience. It is also not of spontaneous generation. The background is Platonic--the enthusiasm of Traherne and More when confronted by the vastness of space and, in the case of Shaftesbury and Addison, the failure of the imagination to grasp what is too big for it. Van Tieghem has missed the sublime altogether.

It is the more idyllic, limited landscape which van Tieghem concentrates on in his book:

Quel est le paysage que jusqu'assez tard dans le siècle les écrivains se plaisent à évoquer? Nous l'avons dit en parlant des poèmes descriptifs: ce paysage reste classique en ce sens qu'il écarte tout ce qui, en élargissant trop le tableau ou en y introduisant des éléments trop hardis, en romprait l'ordre et l'unité, dépasserait l'homme ou lui resterait étranger. Pas de montagnes abruptes, de mers illimitées, de gorges sauvages; rien de ce qui pourrait mêler des impressions de danger, de violence ou d'anarchie dans l'harmonie paisible dont les yeux se réjouissent et qui satisfait l'âme. Une plaine ondulée ou faiblement accidentée; des collines ou de petites montagnes propres à clore doucement la perspective [sic]; des cultures variées, des prairies coupées de haies vives, de ruisseaux ou d'une petite rivière au cours sinueux; des chemins serpentant à flanc de coteau ou au fond du vallon; des rideaux d'arbres, de petits bois dispersés; des troupeaux, des bergers, des laboureurs animant cet ample tableau; ici et là des chaumières d'où s'élèvent des fumées, quelques fermes, un château, au loin un village avec son clocher; un ciel léger, aimable, semé de quelques nuages qui multiplient les effets de lumière et d'ombre. Tel est à peu près le paysage favori dont la plupart des traits se répètent indéfiniment dans

¹Above pp. 157, 167, 191. Metzler, pp. 537, 117, 672. Christian Wolff expresses the idea also: "...es verlieren sich Sinnen und Einbildungskraft...Verstand und Vernunft in der Unendlichkeit, indem wir nicht sehen, wo wir ein Ende finden können." Quoted by Ernst Kohlmeier, Kosmos und Kosmonomie bei Christian Wolff (diss. Göttingen, 1911), p. 63.

la prose et les vers de ce temps.
(p. 134)

Van Tieghem recognizes that the taste for vast perspectives exists as well. Dyer and Thomson are named in this connection but not Brockes. He is the painter of the pleasant rural scene and is classified with others of the same tendency:

C'est ce paysage qu'ont le plus souvent évoqué
Brockes, Thomson, Shenstone, Cowper, Burns, Kleist,
Hölty, même Rousseau.
(p. 135)

Van Tieghem seems to base his ideas of the development of "le sentiment de la nature" on the depiction of this kind of picturesque landscape:

On voit que le progrès a été continu de 1720 environ à la fin du siècle, dans la place que le simple campagne occupait dans la littérature. Contrairement à ce qu'on pourrait croire, elle a été, par la précision colorée des descriptions, par l'expression de plus en plus tendre ou passionnée des sentiments qu'elle inspirait, un des ferments les plus actifs de cette transformation de la littérature dont nous étudions les divers aspects.
(p. 143)

There is no definition of the "sentiment de la nature" but we can deduce from the ideas expressed throughout the book that it is the love of this type of peaceful landscape.

I have to disagree with this passage, as I cannot accept that any art is a faithful representation of reality. Poems by Brockes which describe things objectively are not those which earn for him merit as a nature poet. Like Thomson, Brockes had first to observe. This he did mainly through his interest in science, microscopes, and the theory of light which schooled his

observation and enriched his vocabulary. Consequently a language was forged which could be adapted later for the poetry of the imagination. It is the poems which depart from reality in the way suggested by Addison's theories which lead directly into the future. On the other hand, the peaceful scene reconstructed by van Tieghem has, I feel, no future.

In the later development, the peaceful scene becomes a symbol of the harmony and peace sought after. It is to such a landscape that Wordsworth turns for his "sensations sweet":

The day is come when I again repose
Here under this dark sycamore, and view
These plots of cottage ground, these orchard tufts,
Which, at this season, with their unripe fruits,
Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves
'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see
These hedgerows, hardly hedgerows, little lines
Of sportive wood run wild; these pastoral farms,
Green to the very door; and wreaths of smoke
Sent up, in silence, from among the trees!

Its roots are in the biblical Eden and the locus amoenus¹ of antiquity. It joins other classical motifs such as retirement and the idealization of country life so popular in Augustan poetry in England² and on the continent, motifs which van Tieghem and others consider preromantic.

¹Ernst Robert Curtius, Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter (Bern, 1948), pp. 200 ff.

²Amy Louise Reed, The Background of Gray's Elegy (New York, 1924), pp. 38 ff. Elizabeth Nitchie, Virgil and the English Poets (New York, 1919), pp. 189-192.

The classical "motif of bucolic repose"¹ associated with the landscape depicted by Wordsworth is one of the most familiar in literature. Brockes' "Ruheplatz im Gras" (VII, 190-191) and "Der Sommer" (Metzler, p. 132) use it. Thyrsis in the latter poem sits on the grass and contemplates nature:

Und kurtz, es war ein angenehmer Tag,
Als Thyrsis, wie er öfters pflag,
Im kühlen Schatten einer Linden,
Auf weichem Gras' halb saß, halb lag,
Und bald den Himmel, bald die Welt,
Bald der Natur vollkomm'ne Pracht,
Zum Vorwurf seiner Lieder macht'.
Indem ward er ein reifes Feld,
Worauf der Bauern muntre Schaar
Mit Mähen theils, und theils mit Binden
Beschäftigt war, gewahr.

Brockes depicts, like Gray in the famous Elegy, the countryman returning to rest after a long day's work.²

But the myth of the happy man and the carefree countryman cannot survive the clash with the harsh reality of life. George Crabbe,³ who was a clergyman among the "happy" "pious" farm labourers, saw the sordid, ugly side of country life and rejected the kind of idealized pictures presented by earlier poets such as Blackmore:

Behold the shepherd, see th' industrious swain,
who ploughs the field, or reaps the ripen'd grain,
How mean, and yet how tasteful is their fare!
How sweet their sleep! their souls how free from care!

¹E. R. Curtius, op. cit., p. 190. Virgil's Eclogues I; III, 55 ff; V, 1 ff. Amy Reed, op. cit., p. 41.

²"Die Sonne," stanza 26.

³"The Village" (1783).

They drink the streaming crystal, and escape
Th'inflaming juices of the purple grape...

In later poetry these motifs are used as symbols of the peace sought after by the restless. In the poem "Abendphantasie" Hölderlin describes the ploughman:

Vor seiner Hütte ruhig im Sch^att^aten sitzt
Der Pflüger, dem Genügsamen raucht sein Herd.

The poet himself can find no rest and asks: „warum schläft denn/Nimmer nur mir in der Brust der Stachel?“ In Hölderlin's "Mein Eigentum" the beatus ille theme² has the same function:

Beglückt, wer, ruhig liebend ein frommes Weib,
Am eignen Herd in rühmlicher Heimat lebt,
Es leuchtet über festem Boden
Schöner dem sicheren Mann sein Himmel.

This state is the symbol of peace but there is no rest for the homeless wanderer.

In the disillusioned modern age there is no place for the poetic idealization of rural life. Only the turbulent cosmic powers continue to play a role in poetry. For these reasons I distinguish between two attitudes to nature, which I feel represent two poles of human experience, the peaceful, classical vision emphasized by van Tieghem, and the cosmic to which I have been drawing attention in the course of this study. The distinction has already been made in the Guardian 51, but critics since then persist in bundling many different elements into the same package and wrongly labelling

¹Richard Blackmore, Creation, ed. cit., Bk. IV, p. 358, c. 1.

²The motif is treated in Virgil's Georgics II, 458 ff. and Horace Epode II. It is discussed in Maren-Sofie Røstvig, The Happy Man. Studies in the Metamorphoses of a Classical Ideal 1600-1700. Oslo Studies in English No. 2. (Oslo, 1954).

them preromantic and romantic.

The article discusses "sacred Poesie":

All kinds of Poesie are amiable, but sacred Poesie should be our most special Delight: other Poetry leads us thro' flowery Meadows or beautiful Gardens, refreshes us with cooling Breezes or delicious Fruits, soothes us with the murmur of waters or the melody of Birds;...Sacred Numbers seem to admit us into a solemn and magnificent Temple, they encircle us with every thing that is holy and divine, they superadd an agreeable Awe and Reverence to all those pleasing Emotions we feel from other Lays; an Awe and Reverence that exalts, while it chastises.

What is called sacred poetry is the poetry which we have been concerned with, poetry which has blended science, theology and nature. Such poetry, as we have seen, was considered sublime.

If the distinction which I have suggested is accepted, then van Tieghem is not justified in using the word "preromantic." The rustic scene which he considers important cannot lead to romanticism as it is defined and distinguished from false applications by Professor Eudo Mason in Deutsche und Englische Romantik.¹ The cosmic and the sublime, on the other hand, with the seeds of paradox and irrationality lead to romanticism. The infinite vast spaces, turbulent storms, mysterious forces working behind nature, when separated from a narrower religious framework, are the vehicles for expressing the irrational paradoxical forces which characterize the romantic spirit. The sensation of losing oneself in the experience of the sublime, the

¹Göttingen, 1959.

experience of one's nothingness, when confronted with the vast, lead to a loss of reality and identity. The religious foundations which seemed so strong in the work of Brockes and the other writers were really built on sand, a Deus ex Machina who was identical with the unknown and the incomprehensible. When these foundations crumbled, the released emotions were free to deify nature (already partially deified as "Weltseele" or the pervasive spirit of nature) or one's own "heilig glühend Herz."

CHAPTER IX

BROCKES AND HYMNIC POETRY

In a sense, almost all of Brockes' poems could be called hymns since they celebrate God. There are, however, passages which are truly hymnic since they explicitly apostrophize, invoke and thank God. These are scattered throughout the entire work as interpolations, introductions or conclusions. Quite often they seem to be independent of the actual content of the poem itself and could therefore be omitted without any loss to the poem. In fact, in several cases the result of such an omission would be a pure descriptive poem.

These passages vary from about six to twenty lines. Harry W. Pfund¹ gives several examples in his study of Brockes' style. I have already discussed the religious thought which inspires them; they belong to the scientific background or to the Platonic, and at times both strands are combined. They have several functions. Some are prayers to God for enlightenment, poetic inspiration and religious devotion. Many ask for increased powers of observation and more acute senses in order to perceive God in creation. Some, like the Psalms, exhort man to praise God, or call him to prayer and thanksgiving (Metzler, p. 210). Others are exclamations about God's wonderful works (Metzler, p. 174). They belong to the

¹Studien zu Wort und Stil bei Brockes (New York, 1935), pp. 25 ff. discusses Brockes' apostrophes and gives many examples. He quotes Breiting, Critische Dichtkunst II, 381: „Ausruff...ein Mittel, wodurch die innigste Empfindung einer Leidenschaft sich natürlich entdeckt, und welches vortrefflich dienet die Vorstellung zu vergrößern.“

long tradition which we have been tracing from the Bible, Virgil, Lucretius, the hexaemera, Du Bartas, Blackmore to Thomson. They also occur in the baroque cantata form as arias;¹ Brockes has adapted this form for his own religion of nature.

The fact that Brockes translated a number of well-known hymns² is an indication of his interest in them. He also translated a number of passages³ from Thomson's Seasons before the publication of the complete translation. One would assume that he selected these from the entire work and that the selection would reflect his taste.

The poem "Abermalige Betrachtung des Frühlings"⁴ is based on Thomson's Spring. Brockes' treatment of his

¹Brandl, pp. 128-129 discusses Brockes' cantata form.

²Joseph Addison's "When all thy mercies o my God, my rising soul surveys" and "The spacious firmament on high," discussed in the Appendix, p. 425. Milton's Paradise Lost from Bk. IV line 492 to Bk. V including the "Morning Hymn" in B.H. Brockes, Versuch vom Menschen, des Herrn Alexander Pope, Esq. nebst verschiedenen andern Uebersetzungen und einigen eigenen Gedichten (Hamburg, 1740). Thomson's "Hymn to the Seasons" was translated freely and used as an introduction to the Harmonische Himmelslust im Irdischen... (Hamburg, 1741) and published again with a few minor changes in the complete translation of the Seasons in 1745. See Appendix, pp. 410-415.

³An extract from Spring "The Wild and Irregular Passion of Love" was printed in the Versuch vom Menschen with Brockes' German translation opposite, "Die wilden und unordentlichen Eigenschaften der Liebe, aus Mr. Thomson's Seasons." Also passages in the two poems about to be discussed.

⁴"Abermalige Betrachtung des Frühlings..." VII, 32-49, Tübingen; Hamburg, pp. 34 ff. Brockes acknowledges his debt: "Nach Anleitung einiger Gedancken aus Mr. Thomson Seasons." See Appendix, p. 402 for the complete text.

source is worth noting since it reveals his interest in the beauties of spring and in hymnic passages. The first two pages deal with the beauty of the country as opposed to the unhealthy town. Brockes draws our attention to the song of the birds, the beauty of dew and the fragrance of meadows, and to the different colours of the fruit blossoms. It is a song of thanksgiving for the beauties of the world. He then follows Thomson and asks, "wer kann jemahls der Natur,/In ihren Mahlereyen, gleichen?/Kann unser Sinn die holde Schöpfung und schöne Farben wohl erreichen?" He leaves the text again (p. 37) to discuss flowers and fruit and their sheer abundance (Menge). Then the "Luft-Volk" or "kleine Bürger" of the air start their chorus. He joins Thomson who says to the nightingales, "Lend me your song, ye nightingales; oh pour/The mazy-running soul of melody/Into my varied verse....." Inspired by "the soul of love," various birds form a chorus. Brockes keeps to the text for several pages of free adaptation. The subject is bird life, nest-building, the care of the young and the birds' wisdom in decoying intruders away from the nest. Brockes adds that anyone who cannot see in this activity the Creator's wisdom is not worthy to be called a man. Thomson has a long passage on the cruelty of "tyrant man" who imprisons birds in cages. There is also a passage about a nightingale mourning over the loss of its offspring which was robbed from the nest. Brockes, with his usual desire to avoid sadness, leaves this out and condenses several pages from Thomson about farmyard animals and love in the animal world. This is followed by two hymnic passages translated

from the Seasons. "What is this mighty breath, ye curious say" (Spring, 848) and "Hail, source of Being! Universal Soul/Of heaven and earth, Essential Presence, hail!"

(Spring, 555) The latter is translated as: „Lob sey Dir, allgemeine Seele des Himmels und der Erde! Wesen,/Das mächtig und allgegenwärtig, nur Dir sey Ehre, Lob und Preis!" These two lines introduce the passage, and Brockes repeats them as a conclusion to the entire poem.

Brockes' poem "Morgengedanken"¹ is based on a passage from Thomson's Summer (lines 46-95) which begins with the lines: "The meek-eyed morn appears, mother of dews,/At first faint-gleaming in the dappled east...." Animals appear; the cock crows, sheep bleat and "sie scheinen gleichsam zu entdecken,/Daß sie Dem, Der sie schuf, zur Ehr', mit Freuden leben, fühlen, schmecken." This is Brockes' own addition. Lazy man is admonished for lying in bed and missing the beauty of the morning hours. Brockes gives us a few lines of Thomson's hymnic address to the sun then ends abruptly at the most sublime section. This is unaccountable for one so interested in sublimity and hymns. Could it be that he was called away from his writing? This is not as unlikely as it sounds when we read in the poem "Der Mittag":

Er hätte mehr
Hievon gesungen und geschrieben,
Wenn nicht ein Bote kommen wär',

¹"Belustigende und erbauliche Morgen=Gedancken" VII, 168-172, Tübingen; Hamburg, pp. 180 ff. Brockes acknowledges his debt to Thomson. See Appendix, pp. 423-425.

Der ihn zur Tafel rief. Er must' es denn verschieben.¹
(Metzler p. 209)

The basic elements of the hymn form are found in the earliest hymns--apostrophe, divine attributes, praise, thanksgiving, petitions. The sublime hymns and invocations of the ancient writers were admired and imitated. The following translation of "The Prayer of Cleanthes the Stoic philosopher, to the Supreme God" by Dr. Bowden was published in the Gentleman's Magazine in 1735. Since it is rather long, I have shortened it by giving some of the intervening ideas in brackets:

Great Father of the skies, whose boundless sway,
Both Gods above, and worlds below, obey:
Thy laws sustain the universal frame,
Various thy titles, but thy pow'r the same.
Hail Sovereign Jove! All nations shall address
Their songs to thee, who gave 'em tongue to bless.
Behold thy image grov'ling on the earth,
Faint echoes of thy voice, which gave us birth:
Then back will I reflect thy praises still,
And sing the wonders of Almighty skill.

(The plains, forked lightnings, the sun and ocean, each
atom of creation, all things are under Jove's command.)

Hail! Great support of all inferior things!
The orbs above, and floating seas below,
Move by thy laws, and by thy influence flow;
All, rang'd in order, know their destin'd place,
All but the mad degen'rate human race:
But thou can'st order from confusion bring,
Bid peace from discord, good from evil spring.

(Jove can calm storms, bring peace, expel man's lunacy
and let "reason in our bosoms dwell")

¹Another example: "Wie herrlich! fuhr ich fort. Ich hätte
mehr geschrieben,/Allein mich zwang, die Lob=Red' aufzu-
schieben,/Ein Zuspruch aus der Stadt, der unversehens kam,/Ich
legte denn die Feder nieder..." This is from the poem
"Dreyerley Violen" I, 16-20.

Then with devotion fir'd, we'll hail thee king,
And in eternal songs, thy wonders sing.
No greater good can men, or gods attend,
Than at thy throne with prostrate hearts to bend.

If the name "God" is substituted for "Jove" this ceases to be a pagan hymn. Superficially there seems to be no difference between the old hymnic forms and the new, as the themes are similar. This is not surprising since the Stoics, as we have already seen, provided our eighteenth-century writers with many of their ideas. But the hymns of Brockes, Thomson and like-minded contemporaries are nevertheless different from the earlier hymns or psalms, since they are enriched by ideas and motifs from many different sources. We have already seen how their poetry benefited.

Milton's "Morning Prayer" (or "Morning Hymn") from Paradise Lost, V, 153 ff. is based on Psalm cxlviii.

Addison writes:

The Morning Hymn is written in Imitation of one of those Psalms, where, in the Overflowings of Gratitude and Praise, the Psalmist calls not only upon the Angels, but upon the most conspicuous Parts of the inanimate Creation, to joyn with him in extolling Their Common Maker. Invocations of this Nature fill the mind with glorious Ideas of God's Works, and awaken that divine Enthusiasm, which is so natural to Devotion.

(Spectator 327)

It is therefore the sublimity of Milton's writing which interests Addison. Brockes and Thomson also admire it for the same reason. Brockes published his translation of it twice¹ and Thomson used it and the Psalm (cxlviii) for

¹First in the Versuch vom Menschen and also his "Lehrreiche Geschichte" (VIII, 622 ff.): A shipwrecked German nobleman meets a man on a desert island who tells him his story. He lives there idyllically with his family, close to God and nature. Previously he had been disillusioned with the ways of the world and with other religions, but now he has discovered the true religion which he outlines to the German. It resembles Brockes' religion in its emphasis on the importance of the senses for the enjoyment of life and for the perception of God in creation. As part of their daily worship the children, who know English, recite Milton's hymn which all consider supremely beautiful. Appendix, pp. 420-422.

his "Hymn to the Seasons."

The Psalm begins with the words: "Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the Lord from the heavens: praise him in the heights." Angels, sun, moon and stars, the elements, the mountains and vegetation, animals and men are exhorted to praise God. These are all the creatures mentioned in the story of creation from Genesis. Milton's hymn begins:

These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty! thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair: thyself how wondrous then!
Unspeakable! who sitt'st above these Heavens
To us invisible, or dimly seen
In these thy lowest works; yet these declare
Thy goodness beyond thought, and power divine.
(Paradise Lost, V, 153 ff.)

The ideas are familiar. If God's works are "glorious" and "wondrous fair" how much more fair must the Creator be? Although he is invisible to us, his attributes are revealed in creation. God, according to the psalm, is "in the heights"; Milton's God sits "above these heavens." God in Thomson's "Hymn to the Seasons" is different. Milton's 7 lines are expanded to 36 in Thomson's hymn.

These, as they change, Almighty Father! these
Are but the varied God. The rolling year
Is full of Thee. Forth in the pleasing Spring
Thy beauty walks, Thy tenderness and love.
Wide flush the fields; the softening air is balm;
Echo the mountains round; the forest smiles;
And every sense, and every heart, is joy.
Then comes Thy glory in the summer months,
With light and heat refulgent.
(Hymn to the Seasons, lines 1-9)

God reveals himself in creation through the changing seasons, but he is closer to the earth than Milton's God above the heavens. Thomson almost equates God and Nature for the changing seasons are "but the varied God"; God fills the year, and his attributes of tenderness, love and glory permeate nature.¹

¹Above, p. 156.

Thomson's hymn continues:

Then Thy sun
Shoots full perfection through the swelling year;
And oft Thy voice in dreadful thunder speaks,
And oft at dawn, deep noon, or falling eve,
By brooks and groves, in hollow-whispering gales.
Thy bounty shines in Autumn unconfined,
And spreads a common feast for all that lives.
In Winter, awful Thou! with clouds and storms
Around Thee thrown, tempest o'er tempest rolled,
Majestic darkness! On the whirlwind's wing
Riding sublime, Thou bidd'st the world adore,
And humblest Nature with thy northern blast.
(lines 9-20)

The God who manifests himself in nature by speaking in the thunder and winds and who rides on the "whirlwind's wing" reminds us of the Old Testament conception of God. Psalm xviii is one of several biblical passages containing these motifs. "The Lord also thundered in the heavens..." (verse 13) and, "...yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind" (verse 10). Yet Thomson has modified the Old Testament conception. The angry God has become a God of beauty, tenderness and love (line 4). The frowning God has become the "smiling God."¹ Thomson talks of "dreadful thunder" but God "speaks" (line 11) and his voice sounds gentle. Generally speaking, in the Old Testament thunder is associated with wrath. It can be a judgment or punishment (Exodus ix; Isaiah xxix. 6) or a warning to wickedness (I Sam. xii. 17, 18). The whirlwind is also an instrument of retribution (Psalm lviii. 9; Prov. x. 25; Hos. xiii. 3; Isaiah xl. 24; Jer. xxx. 23). Thomson's God riding sublime on the whirlwind's wing has lost his ferocity.

In the next section of the hymn the conception of God is modified still further:

¹Spring, 861.

Mysterious round! what skill, what force divine,
Deep felt, in these appear!--a simple train,
Yet so delightful mixed, with such kind art,
Such beauty and beneficence combined,
Shade unperceived so softening into shade,
And all so forming an harmonious whole
That, as they still succeed, they ravish still.
But wondering oft with brute unconscious gaze
Man marks Thee not,--marks not the mighty hand
That ever-busy wheels the silent spheres,
Works in the secret deep, shoots steaming thence
The fair profusion that o'erspreads the Spring,
Flings from the sun direct the flaming day,
Feeds every creature, hurls the tempest forth,
And, as on earth this grateful change revolves,
With transport touches all the springs of life.

God is "ever busy"; his attention is necessary to keep the universe in motion. He is not the aloof Aristotelian God or the sleeping God of the deists.¹ At the same time he is the secret force of the Platonist background, almost immanent, responsible for the mysterious changing of the seasons and "The fair profusion that o'erspreads the Spring...." All of these points have already been discussed and illustrated in chapter V.

Before considering how the hymns of Milton and Thomson develop further, we should see how Brockes' hymnic poetry is related to these questions. His translations of these hymns will not tell us much, except where they depart from the original text. Two changes which he makes in Thomson's "Hymn to the Seasons" are revealing. Thomson writes:

On the whirlwind's wing
Riding sublime, thou biddst the world adore,
And humblest nature with thy northern blast.

Brockes translates them freely:

Von der Wirbel=Winde Flügeln scheinst Du, als auf
einem Wagen,

¹Above, p. 80.

Ernsthaft, mächtig, und in Wolcken fürchterlich
empor getragen.
Jetzt siehet man erstarret, blos von Deiner Macht
die Spur.
Du erniedrigst, durch den Frost und den Nord-Wind,
die Natur.

As if such a harsh picture were inconsistent with Brockes' view of God, he introduces two lines of his own:

Doch die Unbequemlichkeit dieser rauhen Zeit zu
mindern,
Schenckest Du uns Holtz und Pelzwerck, den zu strengen
Frost zu lindern.

Such an addition leads one to conclude that Brockes' feeling for the beauty of poetry was very slight, and appears to confirm the thesis of many histories of literature that Brockes is a mediocre writer.¹ Brockes is more critical of inattentive man than Thomson is:

Man marks not thee, marks not the mighty hand
That ever busy, wheels the silent spheres...

This becomes:

Aber wir, mit stumpfen Blicken und nicht sehendem
Gesicht,
Mercken darinn keine Wunder, spühren Gottes Finger
nicht.
Nur auf Eitelkeit bedacht, will man nichts verstehen,
Noch die überall zu sehnde Macht und Weisheit Des
nicht sehen,
Welcher, unaufhörlich, kräftig, die erhabnen Sphären
lenckt...

His hostility to those who are blind to the beauties of God's creation is frequently expressed in his poetry.

Where Thomson sees the changing seasons as "the

¹In his translation practice Brockes is not consistent about such changes. His theodicy is reflected in almost every page of the Ird.Verg. yet for some strange reason he changes Shaftesbury's "my refuge from the toilsome world of business" to "meine Zuflucht, aus der mühseligen Welt voll Pein,/Voll Gram und Sorgen!" (Above, p. 8)

varied God," Brockes distinguishes more clearly between God and creation. God himself is not visible in his works, only his attributes:

Alles zeigt, und verbirgt Dich, Dich nicht, aber
Deine Spur
Lassen alle Wesen sehn. Das veränderliche Jahr
Ist von Deiner Allmacht voll, macht Dein Daseyn
offenbahr.

Brockes' own views on the relationship of God and Nature and the way in which God manifests himself are clearly expressed in the poem "Die schnelle Veränderung":

Ach GOTT! unendlichs ewigs ALL!
Selbstständig=seelige Vollkommenheit,
Gib, daß, so lang ich hier mein Auge rühre,
Ich Dich, verhüllt in ird'scher Herrlichkeit,
Mit Andachts=voller Lust verspüre,
Bis daß dereinsten dort, in den gestirnten Höhen,
Ich Deine Majestät mag ungehindert sehen,
Und bloß an Dir, in ewig=seel'gen Freuden,
Gantz ungestöhrt so Seel' als Augen weiden!
(Metzler, pp. 359-360)

On earth we see God veiled, but in the next life we will see him unveiled.

The Old Testament God of the "Hymn to the Seasons," the God who rides on the whirlwind's wing, speaks in thunder and humbles nature with his northern blast, is also found in Brockes' poetry. In the poem "Die Luft" he controls the winds:

GOTT, der Du der Winde Rasen
Fassest, als in einem Schlauch,
Du versperrst ihr stürmisch Blasen
In der Erden dunkeln Bauch.
(Metzler, p. 56, stanza 79)

Another example from "Der Winter":

Wer zäm't der Winde stürmisch Heer?
Wer ist der, welcher, wenn es frieret,
Den Reifen zeugt, den Schnee gebietet?

Wer mag des Regens Vater seyn?
Unendlichs All, nur Du allein.
(Metzler, p. 451)

This is quite close to Job xxxviii. 28, 29:

Hath the rain a father? or who hath begotten the
drops of dew? Out of whose womb came the ice? and
the hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it?

In Brockes' storm poems, thunder is also associated with God:

Es ist die helle Sonn' ein Bild von Gottes Liebe,
So wie des Donners Grimm die Probe seiner Kraft.
(Metzler, p. 276)

The poem "Gesang zur Zeit des Ungewitters" expresses the same idea:

So oft wir blitzen sehn, so oft wir donnern hören,
Laß uns, HErr Zebaoth, Dich lieben, fürchten, ehren!
Denn ob, im Wetter, gleich uns Gottes Lieb' anlacht,
Sind Blitz und Donner doch auch Proben Seiner Macht.
(Metzler, p. 279)

God's voice is heard in thunder: "Er lässet seine Stimm',
im Donner, gleichsam hören" (p. 277).

The next section of Milton's hymn calls upon all of God's creatures to praise the Creator. The Psalm dictates the hymnic form and the use of personification, but Milton expands the original material. "Praise ye him, all his angels" (verse 2) becomes:

Speak, ye who best can tell, ye Sons of Light,
Angels,--for ye behold him, and with songs
And choral symphonies, day without night,
Circle his throne rejoicing,--ye in Heaven;
On Earth join, all ye creatures, to extol
Him first, him last, him midst, and without end.

All God's creatures are called upon to praise God: sun, moon, stars, mists and exhalations, winds, pines, fountains, birds and man himself.

The corresponding section in Thomson's hymn expands

the material still further. More creatures are recruited into the general hymnic chorus, notably some of the wilder elements such as gales, torrents, thunder and the roaring sea. There is a tendency to outdo Milton and to extend the scene. The sun is described as "ever pouring wide/
From world to world the vital ocean round!" A few words like "boundless" and "vast" are introduced. This, I feel, is due to the interest in the sublime.

The tone of Milton's hymn is peaceful; birds are requested to sing, waters to glide and fountains to murmur melodiously. The same tone is present in Thomson's hymn, probably because he was following Milton, but the more mobile and turbulent elements are also there. Noisy words are balanced with soft ones, there are references to the sleeping and waking worlds, solitary glooms and shade contrast with the swelling chorus and its organ accompaniment.¹ The contrast produces a certain ebb and flow which is not displeasing. It means, of course, that the hymn loses in intensity and does not swell into the climax of a grand chorus.

Although Thomson is restricted to his models, he has modified them by introducing the ideas and the spirit of the new. Besides sublime elements, there are some of the usual motifs; the sun is a painter, man is the lord of creation, the reaper returns from work in the evening. Thomson also adds the sense of smell: "Soft roll your incense, herbs, and fruits, and flowers,/In mingled clouds to him." Another interesting addition

¹Reminiscent of Milton's "Il Penseroso."

points to the later secularization of nature worship; this is Thomson's division of men into two groups, those who worship in church and those who "beneath the spacious temple of the sky,/In adoration join."¹ He calls on the latter group:

Or, if you rather choose the rural shade,
And find a fane in every sacred grove--
There let the shepherd's flute, the virgin's lay,
The prompting seraph, and the poet's lyre
Still sing the God of Seasons, as they roll.

The main subject of this hymn is the call to worship. It is not typical of Brockes' poetry, in which creation itself is already ablaze with praise. It is man who is frequently indifferent and has to be exhorted to take notice of surrounding beauties and praise God:

Willst du, Mensch, da, Gott zu Ehren,
Alles tönet, schallt und spricht;
Tauben Ottern gleich, nicht hören?
Höre, rühme, schweige nicht!
Laß, da, selbst von harten Klippen,
Schöne Töne rückwärts prallen,
Die durchs Ohr gereitzte Lippen
Gott ein Danck=Lied wieder schallen!
(Metzler, p. 9)

Milton's hymn ends with a brief prayer for "only good." He asks God to disperse evil. Thomson indulges in his own speculations instead of following Milton and the Psalm. This freedom enables him to introduce his own ideas. They are the commonplaces which we have already studied in connection with the background of Brockes' poems. God is

¹Brockes is often quite critical of church-goers as victims of "Gewohnheit" entering church "ohn' Andacht" with their worldly thoughts and leaving "ungebessert." He frequently refers to the temple of Nature. "Gottes Tempel" is the title of a poem on this subject (VI, 3-4, Tübingen).

omnipresent. If the poet were sent to distant parts, he would not be dismayed "since God is ever present, ever felt,/In the void waste as in the city full...." He then envisages his death when he will wing his "mystic flight to future worlds" (cosmic journey).¹ Where God is, there is joy and universal love "sustaining all yon orbs and all their sons...." Thomson is ecstatic at the thought of rising in infinite progression "from seeming evil still educating good," and concludes the hymn: "But I lose /Myself in Him, in light ineffable!" Words fail and silence is more eloquent: "Come then, expressive Silence, muse his praise."

The type of moral optimism² expressed here by words such as "harmonious," "transport," "ravish," "beneficence" and beauty," the conception of "seeming evil" and the benevolent God remind us of Shaftesbury. H.N. Fairchild, discussing Thomson's God, emphasizes this aspect:

God himself is so social and smiling that one is tempted to compare Him to the last glimpse of the Cheshire Cat in Alice in Wonderland: all of Him has faded away except the cosmic grin. In the "soft scenes" of spring "the smiling God is seen." His dearest joy is "to see a happy world." The great Parent of the insects is "beauty-beaming."³

The end of the hymnic passage "What is this mighty breath..." (Spring, 847-902) is particularly interesting

¹Above, pp. 100, 167-68.

²Above, p. 158.

³Religious Trends in English Poetry volume I: 1700-1740 Protestantism and the cult of sentiment (New York, 1939), p. 521.

as it points ahead to Wordsworth:

By swift degrees the love of Nature works,
And warms the bosom; till at last, sublimed
To rapture and enthusiastic heat,
We feel the present Deity, and taste
The joy of God to see a happy world.
(lines 898-902)

Another factor which has contributed to the altered idea of God in this hymn is the conception of bounty and plenitude:

Thy beauty shines in Autumn unconfined.
And spreads a common feast for all that lives.
(Hymn, lines 14-15)

In its cruder form this is the theme of Brockes' "Speisemeister"; it appears in a more refined form as the idea of plenitude,¹ the conception of creation as an emanation of God's goodness. All gradations are exemplified in Brockes' poetry.

Enough has now been written in this chapter to show that a hymnic style is developing which combines the various elements from the backgrounds of science, theology and Platonism which we have traced. Most of the hymns of the period share some of these elements. The later ones (Thomson, Brockes) are richer than the earlier ones as they have had more time in which to accumulate the various motifs. Many of these were introduced into Germany by Brockes. German writers who used them later could have found them in the Irdisches Vergnügen, in his translation of the Seasons or directly in common sources. The ideas were common enough. The use of these motifs and their further development

¹Above, pp. 91-92.

could be profitably studied in subsequent German literature.

Der Frühling (1749) by Ewald von Kleist (1715-1759) belongs to this background. Since the text is not always accessible, I shall quote a hymnic passage from it. No commentary should now be necessary, as its components are those which we have already studied in Brockes and Thomson especially. I am using the 1749 edition which is printed in Roman letters, but I have modernized the Umlaut (y=ü; oe=ö; ae=ä).

Wer lehrt die Bürger der Zweige voll Kunst sich
Nester zu wölben,
Und sie für Vorwitz und Raub, voll süßen Kummers,
zu sichern?
Welch ein verborgener Hauch füllt ihre Herzen mit
Liebe?
Durch dich ist alles, was gut ist, unendlich wunder-
bar Wesen,
Beherrscher und Vater der Welt! Du bist so herrlich
im Vogel,
Der niedrig in Dornstauden hüpfst, als in der Veste
des Himmels,
In einer kriechenden Raupe, wie in dem flammenden
Cherub.
See sonder Ufer und Grund! aus dir quillt alles,
du selber
Hast keinen Zufluß in dich. Die Feuermeere der Sterne
Sind Widerscheine von Tropfen des Lichts, in welchem
du leuchtest.
Dein Wagen sind gleitende Wolken, dein Herold geflü-
gelte Winde
Sie eilen und melden dich an in Thönen voll heiligen
Grauens.
Aurora dient dir zum Stuhl. Die Himmel unzählbarer
Sphären
Mit güldnem Schimmer durchbrochen, sind deiner Säle
Tapeten.
Du drohst den Stürmen, sie schweigen, berührst die
Berge, sie rauchen,
Das Heulen aufrührischer Meere die zwischen wässernen
Felsen
Den Sand des Grundes entblößen, ist deiner Herrlich-
keit Loblied.
Der Donner, mit Flammen beflügelt verkündigt mit
brüllender Stimme

Die hohen Thaten von dir. Für Ehrfurcht zittern die
Haine
Und wiederhallen dein Lob. In tausend harmonischen
Thönen
Von dem Verstande gehört, verbreiten Heere Gestirne
Die Grösse deiner Gewalt und Huld von Pole zu Pole.
Doch wer berechnet die Menge von deinen Wundern? Wer
schwingt sich
Durch deine Tiefe, o Schöpfer? Vertraut euch Flügeln
der Winde
Ruht auf den Pfeilen des Blizes, durchstreicht den
Glanzvollen Abgrund
Der Gottheit, ihr endlichen Geister, durch tausend
Alter des Weltbaus,
Ihr werdet dennoch zuletzt kein Pünktchen näher dem
Grunde
Als bei dem Ausfluge sein. Verstummt denn, bebende
Saiten!
So preißt ihr würdger den HERRN.

Many of the motifs of Klopstock's odes will now be familiar.¹
Brockes' Irdisches Vergnügen is merely an earlier stage in
the development. His scientific poems are discursive and
have to prove the love and wisdom of God. Some of his poetry
goes a step ahead (as Shaftesbury's hymns)² and uses
the facts as hymnic exclamations. Klopstock dispenses with
the arguments, proofs and statements, but uses the enthu-

¹The following examples of similar motifs from Klopstock's odes are worth mentioning: "Wer sind die tausendmal tausend, wer die Myriaden alle, / Welche den Tropfen bewohnen und bewohnten, und wer bin ich?" The original image of the "Tropfen am Eimer" is biblical (Isaiah xl, 15; Ecclesiasticus xviii, 8) but the scientific development plays a part. The background of the sublime has prepared the way for the sublimity of these lines: "Hier steh ich. Rund um mich / Ist Alles Allmacht und Wunder Alles! / Mit tiefer Ehrfurcht schau ich die Schöpfung an, / Denn Du, / Namenloser, Du / Schufest sie!" (from Die Frühlingsfeier) Klopstock also talks of the elect who see God in creation: "Wenige nur, ach wenige sind / Deren Aug' in der Schöpfung / Den Schöpfer sieht, wenige, deren Ohr / Ihn in dem mächtigen Rauschen des Sturmwindes hört, // Im Donner, der rollt, oder im lispelnden Bache, / Unerschaffner, dich vernimmt!" -- Dem Allgegenwärtigen.

²Above, pp. 181-183.

siastic conclusions. His use of such words as "Staub," "Verwesung," "Wurm," "Tropfen," in his celebration of God remind us of the scientific development. In Klopstock's poetry we recognize the infinite and omnipotent God of the Old Testament who speaks in thunder, but, at the same time, we note the additional modern associations such as the enthusiasm over scientific developments, the sublimity of space, the sense of the infinitely great and the infinitely small, and the awareness of the hidden forces at work in creation which featured in Brockes' poetry.

In the light of all this, it is strange that Brockes' Irdisches Vergnügen has scarcely been linked to Klopstock's work. Gerhard Kaiser¹ is one of the few to do so in any detail. But he tells us that Brockes, with an eye almost like the lense of a microscope, indulges in "peinlich genaue gegenständliche Abschilderung" (p. 283). He describes objects "mit liebevollster Genauigkeit bis in alle Einzelheiten des Eindrucks" (p. 294). Brockes' and Klopstock's storm poems are compared. The stages of the storm's development are the same, but Brockes' poem is one of observation:

Bei Brockes herrschen eine wissenschaftliche Genauigkeit der Beschreibung und genauester Zusammenhang der optischen Eindrücke, die nur aus dem Abstand des unbetroffenen Zuschauers gewonnen werden können. Die Natur ist in Aufruhr, das lyrische Ich ist gefaßt.

Brockes' storm is "naturwissenschaftlich beobachtet" with a few "Gefühlsäußerungen" here and there (p. 299). Klop-

¹Klopstock, Religion und Dichtung (Gütersloh, 1963).

stock dispenses with description as he dispenses with scientific arguments for the beauty of creation, but retains the enthusiastic conclusions. I disagree with Kaiser's analysis of Brockes' poetry and have already demonstrated that this storm poem is a poem of imagination, not of direct observation. No storm was ever like this one, yet, by his very distortion of reality, Brockes gives a devastating impression of wild movement and shattering sounds which is more "stormlike" than a realistically depicted storm. This is a tremendous achievement which should not be underestimated.

The influential Night Thoughts by Edward Young have comparatively few of the motifs which we have been investigating. Brockes did not feel much sympathy for his ideas. In volume VII of the Irdisches Vergnügen we find Young's lines:

A Part how small of the terraqueous Globe
Is tenanted by man? the rest a Waste,
Rocks, Deserts, frozen Seas, and burning Sands;
Wild haunts of Monsters, Poisons, Stings, and Death:
Such is Earth's melancholy Map! But far
More sad! this Earth is a true Map of Man:
So bounded are its haughty Lord's Delights
To Woe's wide empire; where deep Troubles toss;
Loud Sorrows howl; envenom'd Passions bite;
Ravenous Calamities our vitals seize,
And threat'ning Fate, wide-opens to devour.

Brockes translates them and writes a long poem "Die Beantwortung" in which he discusses and refutes Young's arguments. This poem ends with the advice:

Wann nun dein ungerechtes Murren und die Verkleinerung
der Welt,
(Die doch ein göttliches Geschöpf, das Er so wunderbar
erhält,)
Dein Schmählen, dein betrübter Stolz, dein grämlich
ungeduldigs Flennen.

Zu der Erlangung solches Standes, wohl kein verdienstlich Werk zu nennen;
So suche, wo dir noch zu rathen, durch deines scharfen Geistes Kraft,
Der grämlichen Melancholey verführerische Leidenschaft,
Die schwarze Furie der Seelen, mit frohem Eifer, zu bekämpfen,
Und deines unterdrückten Geistes betrübt= und dunkles Feur zu dämpfen.
„Auf! mache dich, im Glück, durch Lust, im Unglück, durch Gelassenheit,
„Und, GOTT in dieser Welt bewundernd, zu einer bessern Welt bereit.
(VII, 683-693, Tübingen; Hamburg, pp. 729 ff.)

The hymn to the sun is even more interesting for the question of hymnic poetry and the sublime. It goes back to the infancy of literature. I have condensed the following hymn to the sun (1413-1377 B.C):

Hail to thee beautiful Re of every day, who rises at dawn without ceasing...fine gold is not like the radiance of thee. All see you when you cross the sky....Hail to thee sun disc of the daytime, creator of all and maker of their living....Runner, racer, courser!... [the hymn changes to the third person] He makes the seasons by months, heat when he wishes, and cold when he wishes....Every land chatters at his rising in order to praise him.

In a strange and fascinating way the need to apostrophize the sun persists. A form of sun-worship survived even in the Christian period. Eusebius actually witnessed it and St Augustine had to explain to Christians that God was the Creator of the sun and not the sun itself, because some early Christians tended to identify Christ with the rising sun.²

¹The Ancient Near Eastern texts relating to the Old Testament, ed. James Pritchard (Princeton, 1955), p. 367. Other examples of hymns to the sun may be studied in Sumerische und Akkadische Hymnen und Gebete, ed. and trans. A. Falkenstein and W. von Soden (Stuttgart, 1953).

²C.G. Jung, Psychologie und Alchemie (Zürich, 1944), p. 126.

There is an enthusiastic celebration of the sun in practically all the works which we have been considering. Even the more scientific prose works introduce the motif of the supreme sun.¹ Blackmore versifies the usual scientific arguments concerning the sun's utility and excellence, but there are some metaphorical touches.

He writes:

See how th'indulgent father of the day
At such due distance does his beams display,
That he his heat may give to sea and land,²
In just degrees, as all their wants demand!

He uses a biblical image when he considers the sun running his diurnal course "gay as a bridegroom." It is from Psalm xix, "The heavens declare the glory of God," which provided many motifs. "In them [the heavens] he set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race." Pluche, in an otherwise scientific dialogue, embroiders the biblical text:

Mais le soleil seul nous enseigne mieux & nous touche plus que toutes les beautés que le ciel peut étaler à nos yeux. Le ciel n'est que comme le pavillon du soleil. Les voiles richement brodés qui sembloient nous ôter la vûe de cet astre, sont levés quand il s'avance vers nous. Ils sont tirés, & l'on ne voit plus que lui. Il sort paré comme un jeune époux qui quitte sa chambre nuptiale pour paroître au jour le plus solennel de sa vie. En ce moment son éclat est plein de douceur. Tout lui applaudit à son arrivée. Tous les regards se tournent sur lui: & pour recevoir les premiers saluts, il se rend accessible à tous les yeux. Mais il est chargé de répandre par tout la chaleur & la vie,

¹See also Kurt Reichenberger, Themen und Quellen der Sepmaine in Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie, 108. Heft (Tübingen, 1963), p. 176.

²Richard Blackmore, Creation in The Works of the English Poets, ed. Alexander Chalmers (London, 1810), vol. X, pp. 346 ff.

aussi bien que la lumière. Il se hâte d'acquitter cette importante fonction. Il darde plus de feux à mesure qu'il monte. Il passe d'un côté du ciel à l'autre, & fournit sa carrière comme un athlète infatigable. Il vivifie tout ce qu'il éclaire: rien ne peut ni échapper à sa lumière, ni se passer de sa chaleur, & il atteint par ses feux pénétrants aux endroits même où les rayons ne peuvent arriver.
(Pluche, IV, dialogue vi)

Prayers and invocations¹ are typical of the literary background of Brockes' poems. The ancient writers prayed to their gods for inspiration. Du Bartas writes:

Thou radiant Coach-man, running endlesse course
Fountaine of Heat, of Light the liuely source,
Life of the World, Lamp of the Vniuerse,
Heau'ns richest Iem: O teach me whear my Verse
May but begin thy praise...²

The original text is:

Postillon, qui iamais ne vois fin à ta course,
Fontaine de chaleur, de clarté viue source,
Vie de l'Vniuers, clair flambeau de ce Tout,
Riche ornement du Ciel, hé! di moy, par quel bout
Ie doy prendre ton los?

(La Sepmaine, IV, 507)

The sun is called "Oeil du iour" and compared with a mighty prince surrounded by his retinue, and later, with a

Bridegroome braue,
Who, from his Chamber early issuing out
In rich array, with rarest Iems about;
With pleasant Countenance, and louely Face,
With golden tresses, and attractiue grace,
Cheers at his comming, all the youthfull throng
That for his presence earnestly did long,
Blessing the day, and with delightfull glee,
Singing aloud his Epithalamie.

¹Dennis discusses the use of apostrophe in the works of the ancients. "For their Invocations, Apostrophes and the like, which were all of them either a sort of Prayers, or Divine Attestations, they are most of them very Sublime, and attended with a strong Enthusiasm." The Critical Works of John Dennis, ed. Edward Niles Hooker (Baltimore, 1939), vol. I, p. 231.

²The First Weeke: Or Birth of the World of the Noble, Learned, and diuine W. Salustius, Lord of Bartas, trans. Josuah Sylvester (London, 1605), p. 133.

The French original is:

Tu sembles, ô Titan, vn bel espoux qui sort
Le matin de sa chambre, & des rais de sa face,
De l'or de ses cheveux, des attraits de sa grace,
Et des riches couleurs d'vn habit esclatant,
Esgaye à son leuer la presse qui l'attend
D'vn extreme desir, & benit la iournee
Par le chant amoureux d'vn gaillard Hymenee.
(IV, 554-560)

Naturally the sun's prestige increases in the post-Copernican period. Kepler and Copernicus searched for mystical associations and were quite lyrical about the sun. Copernicus wrote:

Then in the middle of all stands the sun. For who in our most beautiful temple could set this light in another or better place, than that from which it can at once illuminate the whole? Not to speak of the fact that not unfittingly do some call it the light of the world, others the soul, still others the governor. Tremigistus calls it the visible God; Sophocles' Electra, the All-seer. And in fact does the sun, seated on his royal throne, guide his family of planets as they circle around him.

The following passage on the sun by Kepler contains the elements of hymns to the sun:

In the first place, lest perchance a blind man might deny it to you, of all the bodies in the universe the most excellent is the sun, whose whole essence is nothing else than the purest light, than which there is no greater star; which singly and alone is the producer, conserver, and warmer of all things; it is a fountain of light, rich in fruitful heat, most fair, limpid, and pure to the sight, the source of vision, portrayer of all colours, though himself empty of colour, called king of the planets for his motion, heart of the world for his power, its eye for his beauty, and which alone we should judge worthy of the Most High God, would he be pleased with a material domicile and choose a place in which to dwell with

¹Copernicus, De Revolutionibus, Bk. I, Ch. 10, quoted by Edwin Arthur Burt, The Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Physical Science (London, 1932), p. 45.

the blessed angels....For if the Germans elect him as Caesar who has most power in the whole empire, who would hesitate to confer the votes of the celestial motions on him who already has been administering all other movements and changes by the benefit of the light which is entirely his possession?... Since, therefore, it does not befit the first mover to be diffused throughout an orbit, but rather to proceed from one certain principle, and as it were, point, no part of the world, and no star, accounts itself worthy of such a great honour; hence by the highest right we return to the sun, who alone appears, by virtue of his dignity and power, suited for this motive duty and worthy to become the home of God himself, not to say the first mover.¹

Even a writer like Sriver changes his usual emblematic style and produces something of a hymn when writing about the sun:

Und leider! die Bösen achten es ["Licht" meaning the sun] so wenig als das Vieh, und die Frommen nehmen es auch nicht nach Würden allemahl zu Hertzen. Unser Heyland führet es an, als eine sonderbahre Wohltat Gottes, und saget nicht ohn Ursach: Seine Sonne, weil sie ein sonderbares herrliches Wunder der Allmacht, Güte und Weißheit Gottes ist, und hat jener weise Mann nicht unschicklich gesaget: Die Sonne wäre ein sichtbahrer Gott, und Gott eine unsichtbare Sonne. Wenige Menschen aber leben unter der Sonnen, die in Ansehung dieses überaus herrlichen Geschöpffs zum Lobe und zur Liebe des allgewaltigen Schöpfers ermuntert werden.

Sriver thinks that some inattentive Christians resemble Seneca's drunkard who had never seen the sun. The passage continues:

Es hat sich der allmächtige gütige und weise Schöpfer in diesem herrlichen Wunder gar stattlich abgebildet. Ein fürtrefflicher Mann unser Zeit nennet sie ein Gleichniß der Gottheit, das Hertz und den Regenten der Natur, und saget, sie sey, als man durch die grossen perspectivien und Augen=Helffer wahrgenommen, anzusehen, wie ein grosses Meer, das mit stets= auffsteigenden Dämpfen walle; Sie sey anzuschauen, wie das geschmoltzene und fliessende Ertz, wann es in den Schmeltz=Hütten in grossen Kuffen stehet, welches immer gleichsam einen Rauch, mit Licht und

¹Christian Sriver, "Die Sonne," LXVIII, Gottholds zufälliger Andachten (Leipzig, 1704).

Feuer gemenget, von sich dämpffet, daraus er denn ferner schleust, daß sie nicht allein die Quelle sey des natürlichen Lichts, sondern auch ein Ursprung aller zeugenden Samen=Kräfte, und daher eine echte Seele der Welt...Sehet! so ist unser GOTT! Ein ewiger Quell=Brunn, der sich mit eitel Güte übergeußt, und von dem alles, was gut ist, ausfleußt, wie ein grosser Lehrer davon redet [Luther]. Ein ewiger Quell=Brunn, der allezeit brennendes liebliches Feuer, ein ewig leuchtendes Licht, eine stets= wallende und fliessende Liebe, ein immerdar lebendes, würckendes, treibendes Wesen, aus welchem aller Dinge Leben, Wesen, und Seyn, uhrsprünglich herrühret...

The tendency to deify the sun persists in the hymns of Shaftesbury, Thomson and Brockes. However, they point out at some stage that the sun is the best image of God, then end with a hymn to the Creator himself. Perhaps they did this in order to protect themselves against accusations of atheism.

Shaftesbury's apostrophe to the sun begins:

Prodigious orb! bright source of vital heat, and spring of day!...Soft flame, yet how intense, how active! how diffusive, and how vast a substance; yet how collected thus within itself, and in a glowing mass confined to the centre of this planetary world!...Mighty being! brightest image and representative of the Almighty! supreme of the corporeal world! unperishing in grace, and of undecaying youth! fair, beautiful, and hardly mortal creature! By what secret ways dost thou receive the supplies which maintain thee still in such unwearied vigour and unexhausted glory; notwithstanding those externally emitted streams and that continual expense of vital treasures which enlighten and invigorate the surrounding worlds?...

(Characteristics, II, 113)

The next section changes to the third person and concerns the circling planets and their precise motions. Next, the "author and modifier of these various motions" is directly addressed: "O sovereign and sole mover, by whose high art the rolling spheres are governed, and these stupendous bodies of our world hold their un-

relenting courses!" Rhetorical questions and observations used as exclamations enlarge this idea. The sun is compared to the earth and the earth to the other members of our solar system and to those of other solar systems. "What is man?" asks Shaftesbury. A mass of "restless and fighting elements" to which God, "our heavenly Sire" can bring harmony, is the answer.¹ God can make men "contribute to the good and perfection of the universe," his "all-good and perfect work."

Thomson's hymn to the sun (Summer, lines 81-174) starts with the lines: "But yonder comes the powerful king of day/Rejoicing in the east." A few lines later the sun is addressed directly:

Prime cheerer, Light!

Of all material beings first and best;
Efflux divine;¹ nature's resplendent robe,
Without whose vesting beauty all were wrapt
In unessential gloom! and thou, O Sun!
Soul of surrounding worlds, in whom best seen
Shines out thy Maker, may I sing of thee!²

The attributes of the sun which are next discussed are the same as those developed in the hymns of Shaftesbury and Brockes. The sun keeps the solar system together by its "secret strong attractive force." Thom-

¹Milton, Paradise Lost, III, lines 1 ff. has similar motifs. The passage refers to light which was created before the sun. "Hail, holy Light, offspring of Heaven first-born!/Or of th'Eternal coeternal beam/May I express thee unblamed?...Bright effluence of bright essence increate!"

²This is from the scientific-theological background. Ray, Wisdom of God, p. 65. The sun is the "very Life of this inferior World, without whose salutary and vivifick Beams, all Motion, both Animal, Vital and Natural, would speedily cease, and nothing be left here below, but darkness and death." A similar idea is in Brockes' "Sonne," stanzas 30, 35 and 36.

son calls on the sun as the life-giver:

Informer of the planetary train,
Without whose quickening glance their cumbrous orbs
Were brute unlovely mass, inert and dead,
And not as now the green abodes of life--
How many forms of being wait on thee
Inhaling spirit, from the unfettered mind,
By thee sublimed, down to the daily race,
The mixing myriads of thy setting beam.
(Summer, 104-111)

The sun is now hailed as "Parent of Seasons" and its influence on the seasons and the vegetable kingdom emphasized. Its power is not confined to "hills and dales, and leafy woods" but reaches into the mineral world.¹ These ideas are discussed by Marjorie Nicolson in Newton Demands the Muse,² in the chapter on "Color and Light." The lines 140-159 of Summer are reminiscent of one of Newton's experiments; a footnote gives full details. Of the passage itself she writes:

Thomson begins with the white light of the diamond, watches in the spectrum the ruby's red, the yellow of the topaz, the green of the emerald, the "hue cerulean" of the sapphire, and the purple of the amethyst, with its evening tint. All the colors come together in the "whitening opal," which dimly reflects each of them, and which begins to return them to the white light from which they were derived.
(pp. 28-29)

As in the Seasons as a whole, there is a certain amount of Augustan poetic diction in this hymn which creates a different atmosphere from that of the other hymns we are discussing. The following passage is a good example:

Meantime the expecting nations, circled gay

¹Above, p. 112. I have quoted and discussed this part of the hymn.

²Princeton, 1946.

With all the various tribes of foodful earth,
Implore thy bounty, or send grateful up
A common hymn; while round thy beaming car
High-seen the Seasons lead, in sprightly dance
Harmonious knit, the rosy-fingered hours,
The zephyrs floating loose, the timely rains,
Of bloom ethereal the light-footed dews,
And, softened into joy, the surly storms.
(lines 117-125)

Brockes' poem "Die Sonne" (Metzler, pp. 180-204) consists of 72 stanzas and contains material from all the backgrounds which we have discussed. Hymns are usually much shorter and a certain hymnic intensity depends on the concentration. One would think that Brockes' poem would degenerate into the type of the other very long scientific poems, but he manages, by a series of apostrophes, to maintain the hymnic spirit in the scientific section. The remainder is elevated by the sublime treatment of the infinite universe.

The opening stanzas apostrophize the sun:

Lebens=Quelle, Brunn der Strahlen,
Sonne, Göttlichs Schatten=Bild
Die zu tausend, tausend mahlen
Uns're Welt mit Glantz erfüllt!
Wie die allerstärcksten Augen
Nicht, dein Licht zu dulden, taugen;
So verblendet auch dein Blitz
Und dein Wesen unsern Witz.

Helles Welt=Meer aller Freuden!
Fürst des Lichts, Monarch der Zeit!
Glantz, vor dem die Schatten scheiden!
Gülden' Uhr der Ewigkeit!
Mittel=Punct der Himmels=Kreise!
Nahrung, Leben, Kraft and Speise
Aller Körper, die die Welt
In dem weiten Schooß erhält!

It is interesting to note how common motifs have become part of the hymnic style in these stanzas and throughout the poem: the utility of the sun, its perfect posi-

tion in the universe, its role in providing for man's needs, the colours which it bestows on the world, its influence on the seasons, its provision of light and life, without which the world would be a prison or a desert, its influence on man's soul by raising him to God. Man loses himself in admiration when he considers its infinity, vastness and relationship to the other heavenly bodies; he experiences ecstasy at the thought of God's still vaster greatness and of an imaginary cosmic journey.

In an earlier chapter¹ we considered Shaftesbury's hymnic manner and noted that he used scientific material as exclamations of wonder rather than as factual statements. Brockes does the same thing in this hymn to the sun. Following the hymnic form, he apostrophizes the sun and lists its powers and attributes:

Unsers Himmels schönste Stelle!
Grosser Mittel=Punct des Lichts!
Farben=Vater! Freuden=Quelle!
Geist und Seele des Gesichts!
(stanza 9)

The next two stanzas illustrate these epithets. The "Farben=Vater" paints with golden brushes and

Der erhab'nen Berge Spitzen
Ziert dein früher Morgen=Strahl,
(stanza 10)

the sun is addressed as

Ursprung der Belebungs=Kräfte!
Ausfluß aller Geistigkeit!
Brunnquell aller Zeugungs=säfte!
Feind von aller Dunkelheit!
(stanza 12)

The next stanzas again illustrate these titles. The

¹Above, pp. 181 ff.

sun brings joy to the world and a richness of plant life which delights and nourishes. Brockes adds the terror of the sublime to the argument from the scientific background to prove that the sun is in the best possible place for its function:

Welch ein Abgrund voller Schrecken,
Welche düstre Kercker=Kluft
Würde sich bey uns entdecken?
Welche grause Todes=Gruft?
Würde nicht dieß Rund der Erden
Augenblicks zur Hölle werden,
Wenn der holden Sonnen Schein
Stets uns sollt' entrissen seyn?
(stanza 35)

Schwärtzer, als des Abgrunds Rachen,
Wär' die Welt, ohn' deinen Strahl;
Ein entsetzlichs Nest der Drachen,
Ein verwildert Mörder=Thal;
Nichts, als ew'ge Wüsteneyen,
Wo nur Eulen würden schreyen,
Wo Gespenster Bürger sind;
Blinder Larven Labyrinth.
(stanza 36)

Brockes' poem has 41 stanzas addressed to the sun. God is mentioned in stanza 42 after several stanzas describing how the world owes its beauty to the sun:

Dann rührt ein erstaunt Gemüthe,
Gottes Wunder, Gottes Güte,
Und, erquickt durch solche Pracht.
Rühmt es Den, Der sie gemacht.

The next stanza is a brief lapse into the third person.

Brockes thinks

Wie die Sonne diese Welt
Nicht allein erleuchtet, lencket,
Schmückt, erwärmet und erhält,
Sondern noch viel' andre zieret,
Dreht, belebt, bestrahlt, regieret...

and loses himself in such infinite, boundless contemplation.

Stanza 46 takes up the hymnic apostrophe once more:

Ocean so vieler Erden,
Himmlich Lichts= und Lebens=Meer,
Reich, darin vereinigt werden
Dieser grossen Körper Heer,
Zeiget nicht dein weit Gefilde
Die Unendlichkeit im Bilde,
Wenn ich ein unendlichs Blau
In des Himmels Höhen schau?

The subsequent stanzas develop the idea of infinity and, although the first person is again abandoned, there is a certain hymnic sublimity in the thoughts of the vastness of the sun's kingdom; this is expressed by such words as "unergründlich," "grenzenlos," "unumgrenzt." Also, the poet's attempt to rouse himself to admiring contemplation is in the hymnic tradition:

Auf, mein Hertz, zu überzeugen
Auf, bewundernd zu erregen,
Welch ein unumgrenzt Revier
Dieser Strahlen=Fürst regier',
(stanza 50)

The next stanza is a good example of the kind of rhetorical devices used in this poem to produce a hymnic style:

Der Begriff von seiner Kronen
Schrenckt, mit ewig=hellem Schein,
Hundert tausend Millionen
Millionen Meilen ein,
Die er wärm't, erfüllt, durchstrahlet,
Sie belebt, bewege, malet.
Welche Tiefe, welch ein Reich,
Welche Gröss' ist dieser gleich?

In the course of this study I have been unwilling to use words like "physico-theology" and "romanticism" since I felt that they cover too wide a field to be accurate. My use of the word "sublime" could perhaps be criticized on the same grounds. The term also has a wide range, although I hope that the illustrations which I

have made it quite clear. I have shown it to be an irrational feeling composed of varying degrees of pleasure and terror aroused by certain subjects which baffle the imagination and the reason and carry man upwards to the God of the infinite. Microscopy, astronomy, religion, mountains and vast perspectives inspire this feeling.

Hymns and psalms were very popular because they were considered to be sublime. However, when we look back on the examples of hymns which have been discussed in this chapter, it will be obvious that there are different degrees of sublimity. Addison's "Spacious Firmament on High" and Milton's "Morning Hymn" do not soar as much as some passages in the hymns by Brockes, Shaftesbury and Thomson. This is due, perhaps, to the elements or motifs which comprise the hymns. Milton depends more on rhetorical devices while the other group exploits emotions such as enthusiasm. All use the hymnic form with apostrophe and exclamation, but the results are different.

The difference may be analysed if we break the texts down into different strands. It is not within the scope of this study to do this in detail, but the most obvious differences may be briefly indicated. Brockes, Thomson, and Shaftesbury are similar, but there are some differences due to their arrangement of motifs and the space which they devote to them. Shaftesbury's Character-

istics is concerned with ethical issues and is characterized by a tone of moral optimism. This tone is also present in his hymnic passages where it is created by words like "harmony," "beauty," "perfection," "peaceful innocence," "ever-flourishing," "inspiring tenderness," and "happiest mortals." Superlatives are a feature of this optimistic style, since it belongs to the philosophy of the best of all worlds. However, there is also the idea that beyond this world is an even better one to which one can soar or progress. Thomson's Seasons and some of his hymnic passages are permeated by this tone.

Brookes does not indulge very often in this philosophy, and therefore his work is different. But Brookes and Shaftesbury have in common the interest in the sublime which is shared to a lesser degree by Thomson. Here again, the distinction has to be made. In the Seasons Thomson treats certain aspects of the sublime such as the vast perspective, deserts and distant climes, wild nature in storms and floods, but his attitude to mountains¹ and cosmic space is different from that of Shaftesbury and Brookes. In addition, "Die Sonne" and a few other poems bring in the religious ecstasy which we noted in the works of Traherne and Norris.²

The sublime could be subdivided into the rhetorical and the enthusiastic sublime. But even within these categories variations could be found. I am rather opposed to such systems of labelling and should like to substitute the method which I have developed in the course of

this study, the pursuit of motifs as related to the background from which they originated. This seems to make for greater precision and a deeper understanding which could minimize the errors of interpretation abounding in the history of literature. I hope that I have shown how an important literary period has, in Brockes' case, been obscured by such vague labels as "Naturgefühl" and "preromanticism."

Another factor which determines the sublimity of the hymn is the author's conception of God. We have already noted that Fénelon's prayers were different from those written by Brockes, because of his introspective search for a personal relationship to God.¹ His thought swings like a pendulum between himself and God and the distance necessary for sublimity is therefore lacking. The same is true of a prayer which Addison translated.² God is everywhere about us, and within us. Fénelon does not emphasize that God is above or beyond us. His prayer does not therefore give us the impression of soaring. He does not even concentrate on God alone-- this would ensure some degree of sublimity--but swings to man and his limitations. God is everywhere: "Vous êtes auprès d'eux men et au-dedans d'eux; mais ils sont fugitifs et errants hors d'eux-mêmes."³ God is the "vie pure et

¹Above, p. 161.

²Joseph Addison, The Evidences of the Christian Religion (Oxford, 1801), pp. 94-96.

³Démonstration de l'existence de Dieu in Oeuvres spirituelles de François de Salignac de la Mothe Fénelon (Paris, 1822), vol. I, pp. 144-145.

bienheureuse de tous ceux qui vivent véritablement," Fénelon tells us. Then he writes: "Hélas! vos dons qui leur montrent la main d'où ils viennent, les amusent jusqu'à les empêcher de la voir."¹

Sublimity seems to require a conception of an omnipotent God similar to the God of the Old Testament as is found in the psalms and in Milton's hymnic passage. In other words, there must be a certain distance between God and man. A pantheistic conception of God would abolish this distance. Although the Old Testament God has always been an infinite God, this attribute has been considerably modified by the new enthusiasm for science and the new post-Copernican conception of the world, "the breaking of the circle" which requires the mind of man to soar. Writers like Shaftesbury, Brockes, and Klopstock, whose work incorporates these new associations, seem to me to express a higher degree of sublimity.

The adaptation of pagan hymns to the gods and to the sun maintains the link between this literary tradition and paganism, a link which could lead to a new paganism. In an earlier chapter we noted how elements from the ancients were assimilated. We also noted the absence of Christian dogma. The path to secularization therefore lies open. The theological framework is already weak,

¹Hans M. Wolff, "Brockes Religion," PMLA, LXII (1947), 1135 gives this theme as one of the points which suggest that Arndt influenced Brockes. Arndt writes: „Aber siehe nun, wie übel du tust, du elender Mensch, daß du der Gabe kleben bleibest, an einer Handvol Gold und Silber, Häuser und Aecker..." (Introduction to Bk. IV of Vom wahren Christenthum).

owing to the use of deus ex machina arguments. As advancing science threatened religion, various efforts were made to keep God in the universe as an active presence. Arguments were taken from the enemy camp. Alexandre Koyré¹ gives the names of Leucippus, Democritus, Demetrius, Metrodorus, Epicurus and all the Stoics as Henry More's "enemies and allies." Newton² used arguments from the atomists, and the Cambridge Platonists revived the ancient idea of the spirit of Nature³ and "joined issue with the mechanic philosophers."⁴ This practice made them vulnerable as the Leibniz-Clarke controversy shows,⁵ and their very efforts to keep God in the universe prepared the way for his expulsion.

The future development of the ode and of nature poetry seems to me to have its roots in the complex of factors which I have attempted to demonstrate throughout this study. To regard it as a purely literary development is inadequate. Religious elements are particularly important. With secularization they do not melt into thin air, but simply adapt themselves to secular inter-

¹Koyré, p. 140.

²Ibid., p. 211.

³Herbert Drennon, "Newtonianism: Its Method, Theology, and Metaphysics," Englische Studien, LXVIII (1933/34), 403.

⁴R.L. Brett, The Third Earl of Shaftesbury: a study in eighteenth-century literary theory (London, 1951), p. 17.

⁵Above, p. 86.

ests. Religious emotion is liberated for nature worship, for the exaltation of the ego or of the mysterious forces which control man's destinies.

Goethe's hymns mark an interesting stage in this development. Prometheus is an anti-hymn protesting against the hymnic celebration of the gods. Man's "heilig glühend Herz" is substituted. The necessary distance between the poet and what is celebrated is therefore absent. Similarly when the poet seeks to join the gods in a mystic union there is no distance (Ganymed). Wandrer's Sturmlied¹ is so totally concerned with the poet's most personal problems, far below the surface of consciousness, that Goethe called the poem "Halbunsinn." Paul Böckmann in his essay "Eighteenth century hymnic verse" traces the whole development from the eighteenth century to what he calls a Modus dicendi in the modern age. His observations are extremely stimulating. My premises and terms of reference, developed in this study, are different, the mystery of creation and man's search for God. What emerges from this development is what I would call "cosmic poetry." The elements, raging storms, the vast ocean, underground caverns, indeed those subjects

¹For me this poem is very rich in meaning and not "Halbunsinn." Nor do I find in it the irony which the following article suggests it expresses--Elizabeth M. Wilkinson and L.A. Willoughby, "Wandrer's Sturmlied a study in poetic Vagrancy," German Life and Letters, I (1947-48), 102-115.

²Reality and Creative Vision in German Lyrical Poetry, ed. August Closs (London, 1963), pp. 121-134.

which were repeatedly treated in the works we have been investigating will serve as symbols of man's conflicts, aspirations, instincts, passions, of all those underground forces which are only partially understood but richly experienced in a heightened inner life. Such irrational forces can only be expressed in poetry, the poetry for which Brockes and his group paved the way.

CHAPTER X

THE BROCKES MYSTERY

Previous chapters have been concerned with accumulating evidence, and until this was completed some questions have had to be postponed. The more difficult task of interpreting much of this material has now to be faced. Brockes' so-called "autobiography"¹ and several autobiographical poems reflect a rather dull bourgeois, yet some of his poems reveal that he was not without sensibility. Some poems show considerable talent and others are impossibly banal and bad. If we try to reconstruct his philosophy,² we find it almost impossible to see any consistent picture. Yet Brockes treated the most important ideas in circulation in Europe before any other of his own compatriots. Was he in tune with the Zeitgeist?

In these biographical writings, Brockes' religion sounds very self-centred, as if God's main function in the universe were to look after Brockes and his family and concern himself with their material welfare. He adapted his Lutheranism to suit his own inclinations and bitterly opposed anything which was uncomfortable

¹ J.M. Lappenberg, Zeitschrift des Vereins für hamburgische Geschichte, vol. II, pp. 167-229. This sketchy autobiography edited by Lappenberg only goes as far as the year 1731. See also Brandl, p. 2 for further biographical sources.

²

I use the word "philosophy" advisedly especially since Maurice Colleville in his La Renaissance du lyrisme dans la poésie allemande du XVIII^e siècle considers Brockes to be worthy of the title "le Philosophe" to which he devotes a chapter. One can speak of Brockes' outlook on existence but not of his philosophy.

such as the doctrine of hell¹ and the mortification of the flesh.² Several poems which he wrote about his children reveal considerable tenderness.³ Others seem to be inspired by a love of plants and animals which reminds one of St. Francis of Assisi.⁴ Yet his feelings curiously changed when his own pleasure was involved. Animals supply man with food and clothing. Hunting is one of man's pleasures; Brockes does not share Thomson's sensitivity about the suffering of animals at the hands of huntsmen and ruthless schoolboys.⁵ His views are clearly expressed in three poems on hunting, fishing, and fowling--"Einige Betrachtungen über das Jagen, Fischen und Vogelstellen..." (VI, 137-150, Tübingen). The idea in fact occurs to him that some cruelty is involved in these sports. "Die schwächliche Belise" (probably Brockes' wife as this is the name given to her in his poetry) objects:

Ich entsetze mich dafür.
Solch ein allerliebstes Thier
Ist, o Schad, erwürget worden.
Seht den schönen Kopf, die Brust!
Seht das glänzende Gefieder,
Die gebrochnen Augenlieder,
Nebst dem schlaffen Hälschen an!
Sprecht, was haben sie gethan?
Es betrübet sich mein Geist,

¹VI, 514, Tübingen.

²VI, 338, Tübingen.

³Brandl, p. 75.

⁴"Zwo lehrende Bienen," VI, 17-19, Tübingen; Hamburg, pp. 20 ff. "Der geflügelte Lehrer," VI, 48-51, Tübingen; Hamburg, pp. 54 ff.

⁵August, lines 360 ff. Another passage, Spring, lines 360 ff. concerns the slaughter of sheep. There is more information about this question in Myra Reynolds, The Treatment of Nature in English poetry (Chicago, 1909), p. 88.

Und mich deucht, ein Vogelheerd
Sey mit allem Rechte werth,
Daß man ihn der Sanftmuth Schwerdt,
Und der Unschuld Schlachtbanck heißt.

The genuine sympathy for animals which is expressed in these lines is scarcely dispelled by Brockes' own argument:

Deine Klage scheint gerecht. Aber ist der Vögel Orden
Weniger, als andre Thier, uns zum Nutz erschaffen
worden?
Sollten sie denn uns nicht nützen? Sollten sie
vielleicht allein
Des ergrimten Habichts Klauen und der Sperber Beute
seyn?
Oder sich zu häufig mehren? Müssen sie nicht alle
sterben,
Und vermuthlich kläglicher, und empfindlicher
verderben?

Brandl mentions Brockes' claim that his interest in art and music protected him "vor den rohen und sinnlichen Ausartungen seiner Collegen" but quotes several passages which could suggest otherwise.¹ Brockes himself mentions an encounter with an amorous noblewoman in Venice. His Italian failed him and she asked him to speak German. Brockes writes „Ich konnte aber in dem Augenblick vor Verwirrung und gegeneinanderlaufenden Affekten nicht einmal teutsch sprechen.“² By the grace of God he emerged from the adventure unstained. He writes: „So oft ich hieran gedenke, finde ich meine Schuldigkeit, Gott für so augenscheinlichen Schutz, da er mich wowohl für Sünden als Gefahr so gnädig behütet, von Herzen zu danken.“

¹Brandl, p. 14.

²Lappenberg, op. cit., pp. 183-185. This episode is also discussed by Emil Ermatinger, Deutsche Dichter (Bonn, 1948), p. 56.

Divine grace, in this instance, came in the form of a stream of visitors which prevented Brockes from keeping his appointment with the lady!

Hermann Hettner, Geschichte der deutschen Literatur im achtzehnten Jahrhundert in the section on Brockes tells us of the cold, calculating search for a wealthy wife. Brockes eventually married Anna Ilsabe Lehmann in 1714. Brandl (p. 25) says that the marriage was a happy one. The poem "Gedancken über den Tod der Belise"¹ is full of information which suggests that it was not exactly ideal. Temperament and religious attitudes were totally incompatible. Brockes also admits that his wife was worn out physically and mentally by "achtzehn Wochenbetten." The following lines leave much to the imagination: "Was ich auf Erden ausgestanden, sprach sie, das weist du, GOTT allein." These words were spoken shortly before her death, when her frame of mind was rather unbalanced and she was tortured by the fear of hell.

Besides revealing something about Brockes the man, the following passage is a good indication of the way in which Brockes writes when he is not dependent on external sources:

Daß das nunmehr verstrichne Jahr
Auch abermahl für mich ein Jahr des Seegens war,
Da nemlich Kranckheit, Pein und Schmertzen
Beschimpfung, Grämen, Hertzeleid,
Verlust und Wiederwärtigkeit,
So von den Meinen als von mir,
So väterlich, so gnädig abgewand.

¹VI, 506-519, Tübingen.

Brockes prays for continued blessings then writes:

Gib, daß wir Eltern doch mit Sorgfalt uns bemühen,
Den sieben Kinderchen, die Du uns Herr, beschert,
Durch ein Dir wolgefälligs Leben¹
Ein gut Exempel stets zu geben.

This prosaic style is sometimes found in his best poems as in the "Schnee=Gestöber" which has already been quoted for its excellent descriptive power. Brockes' opening lines are poor; "Im vierzigsten nach siebzehn hundert Jahr,/Da ein recht strenger Winter war,/Am sechsten Tag' im Februar", he sees a snow flurry. Then his imagination inspires him and the poem takes on new life and movement.

There seem to be no definite laws governing Brockes' successes and failures. Good and bad passages are to be found side by side, not only in the same volume, but frequently in the same poem. Brockes writes poems about the same subjects over and over again. Some are excellent while others are impossible. The following is an example of Brockes' long-winded manner:

Was können wir für Wunder mehr entdecken,
Wann wir, auf welche Art die Vögel gehen, stehn,
Und auf den Zweigen sitzen, sehn,
Es sind drey Biegungen an jedem Bein zu finden,
Die sich mit einer Nerv', auf solche Art, verbinden,
Daß, da gedachte Nerv' um alle die drey Glieder,
Von oben ab hernieder
Bis um und in die Zehe geht,
So bald ein Vogel=Fuß gerade steht,
Die Zehe sich bequem verbreiten,
Und aus einander spreiten.

(Metzler, pp. 256-257)

Brockes can also write ably and concisely on such subjects, as abundant passages quoted throughout this study will have shown.

¹"Morgen-Gebet im Winter" (I, 489) from a group of "Neu-Jahrs=Gedichte."

Time and again, a poem which promises to be excellent is marred by some defect, and sometimes a poor poem contains excellent lines. The poem "Betrachtung verschiedener zu unserem Vergnügen belebten Insecten" (IV, 201-204; Tübingen, pp. 167-170) discusses insects in a serious, pseudo-scientific manner. In the middle of this, Brockes lapses into involuntary but charming humour, almost as if he were writing whimsical poetry for children à la A. A. Milne. It is also an excellent piece of observation.

Die Hummel fliegt mit Brummen hin und her;
Ihr Körper scheint in sich schwer,
Als wenn er in der Luft ein kleiner Bär
Mit Flügeln wär.

Such transitory successes are possibly fortuitous as are the flaws. Brockes seems to lack poetic sensitivity. How else can one explain his tasteless alteration of Thomson's "Hymn to the Seasons"?¹ There he was more concerned with preserving his idea of the good bountiful Creator than with preserving the poetry. Whether he had the judgment to distinguish between good and bad poetry is questionable.

It is irritating to find in the Irdisches Vergnügen that so many promising poems are marred by some flaw. The poem "Die schnelle Veränderung" (Metzler, pp. 354-360) is quite promising. Brockes admires a landscape bathed in sunshine:

Nie hab' ich auf der Welt solch einen Glantz verspüret,
Und niemahls ist mein Geist empfindlicher gerühret.

¹Above, p. 306.

He builds up our interest very successfully in subsequent lines:

Indem ich nun voll Freuden stand,
Und alle Herrlichkeit, vor Lust erstaunt, besahe;
Ach höret, was mir da geschahe,
Was ich verwunderlichs empfand!

Surely we have been promised something exciting! The poem continues:

In einem Augenblick verschwand
Licht, Himmel, Sonne, Wasser, Land.
Ein' unvermuthete Pech=schwartz Dunckelheit
Verschlang das reine Licht,
Begrub des Himmels Pracht,
Vernichtigte vor mir
Der gantzen Erde gantze Zier,
Ja raubte gleichsam mich mir selbst, ich fand mich
nicht.

Brockes' readers are now anxious to know what has happened and the lines prove to be somewhat of an anti-climax which some might call an artistic failure:

Der schnelle Wechsel=Sprung zur Finsterniß vom Licht,
Vom Schmuck der Welt zum Nichts, entstand daher,
Weil ich mein Augen=Lied ein wenig mehr
Geschlossen hielt, als insgemein geschicht;
Und bloß dadurch allein
Verging für mich die Welt, verschwand des Himmels
Schein.

On the other hand, this apparent flaw is excusable when we remember the context of science and philosophy and the excitement which new ideas aroused. This will be discussed later, and the reader can then judge the merits of this poem.

Since Brockes' deficiencies have already been over-publicized, no further space need be devoted to them. Brockes is obviously a poet who ranges from the sublime to the ridiculous, and an attempt must be made to explain this paradox. In fact, there is such a mixture

of styles in his Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott that it is more like the work of several hands than of one man. Such an artistic problem is not confined to poetry, but when it occurs in the other arts, the explanation is usually quite obvious. For instance, the painter André Derain has no independent style; the source of each painting is however easy to detect. He passed chronologically from one influence to the other without developing independently. But there is no chronological pattern in Brockes' poetry. If it could be shown that the bad poems belong to the beginning or to the latest stages of his career, and if an evolution or decline could be traced, such uneven standards could be explained, but the same mixture of good and bad poems is found throughout his works.

Brockes' critics have different opinions about the evolution of his poetry. Wieland mentions volume I, "wo man überhaupt seine besten Sachen suchen muss."¹ Since the views of the great are readily accepted, this idea is repeated in later criticism. B. J. Zinck in his preface to volume IX of the Irdisches Vergnügen thinks that Brockes' best work dates from the first two volumes.² Brandl would agree.³ Imogen Kupffer⁴ claims that his didacticism diminishes, van Tieghem⁵ that it increases.

¹Morton Collins Stewart, "Barthold Heinrich Brockes' Rendering of Thomson's Seasons," JEGP, X (1911), pp. 20-41.

²Above, p. 15.

³Brandl, pp. 77, 123.

⁴Kupffer, p. 73.

⁵Le sentiment de la Nature dans le Prérromantisme Européen (Paris, 1960), p. 15.

Harold Jantz¹ considers the assertion that "Brockes could not sustain a fine poetic vein through volumes III-IX of his work" to be a myth.

I find in all the volumes of Brockes' Irdisches Vergnügen no signs of progress or decline. In fact, it was the strange mixture of styles which intrigued me about Brockes in the first instance. I felt that the banal superficial style was Brockes' own personal way of writing, and that he wrote like this when he had no source in mind. The various New Year poems which are concerned with his own immediate interests are almost all in this style. Then I read the lines:

Gefild und Wälder! meine Zuflucht aus der mühselgen
Welt voll Pein
Voll Gram und Sorgen! nehmt mich ein
In euer ruhig Heiligthum!

Obviously, Brockes could not write such a poem independently. The poem reminded me of Shaftesbury and I found the original without much trouble. Part of the poem "Die Berge" reminded me of Burnet's New Theory of the Earth. Brockes had indeed found his ideas there. My hypothesis seemed to be confirmed. Whenever Brockes wrote a poem which could be taken seriously he was using material from other writers. I scoured European literature for similar evidence but made no comparable discoveries.

Brockes seems at first to be a researcher's goldmine, but when one starts to exploit it, hypothesis after hypothesis collapses for want of evidence. Brockes is

¹ "Brockes' Poetic Apprenticeship," MLN, LXXVII (1962), 440.

baffling. I could not prove that his poetry improved when he used foreign sources. Poems based on Pluche and Addison¹ are infinitely worse than the original. On the other hand, his free translations of Thomson and Shaftesbury, although inferior to the sources, are better than anything which Brockes could produce independently. The only explanation I can offer for this apparent contradiction is that Brockes must feel an enthusiasm for the subject which sweeps him along. We have noted what inspires him most, the hymn and the sublime. Here, Brockes can be said to succeed.

Brockes adapted foreign sources for religious purposes rather than for poetic purposes. Despite his pride in and obvious enjoyment of the great praise which was first lavished upon him, he did not appear to be unduly distressed by adverse criticism. Brandl writes:

...man sagte es dem Dichter in das Gesicht, er halte 'Froschpredigten' und schreibe ein 'Kräuterbuch'. Brockes lächelte dazu, litt es scheinbar, williglich und gönnte jedem gern, daß er auf andre Weise sich bestrebe, Gott den Herrn zu rühmen'. Aber zugleich dichtete auch er in seiner Weise unermüdlich weiter und begnügte sich, seinen Lesern, wie zu Entschuldigung die Motive vorzulegen, welche ihm stets wieder die Feder in die Hand drückten...²

Brandl quotes a long passage which clearly states that Brockes' aim in writing poetry is to arouse those who are indifferent to the beauty of creation and to the glory of the Creator. Another long poem "Verteidigung meines vielen Schreibens" (VIII, 396-403, Tübingen)

¹Above, chapter VII.

²Brandl, p. 84.

repeats these arguments and makes it perfectly clear that Brockes is not particularly concerned with poetic excellence.

Brockes' poems could be arranged in an evolutionary pattern but those which would qualify for a place at the top of the scale were frequently written before others which would be placed at the foot. One could explain this perhaps by saying that Brockes is a transitional figure. But James Thomson is also a transitional figure, who had to harmonize an even greater amount of disparate material than Brockes, yet his work is even and has the unity which belongs to a single author. His motifs, however discordant, blend into a unified work written in one style.

Keats's idea of "negative capability" may be distorted slightly and applied to Brockes. As a man Brockes seems to have a definite personality which is expressed in his autobiographical works. As a poet he has no artistic personality and is just a channel receiving and passing on material. For the most part this is not subjected to the creative process which Keats's material undergoes in order to emerge as a true work of art. It is this negative aspect of Brockes which has made him an important figure in the history of literature purely by accident, for, if he had had greater intelligence and more depth, he would probably have kept to the well-trodden paths, following the rules and the lawgivers. Although a good case could be made for Brockes'

remarkable talent in picking the most important ideas in circulation at the time, there is evidence that he imported much that was worthless also. To what extent he was in tune with the Zeitgeist is one of these impossible Scheinfragen. I feel that Brockes was creative in the way in which popular etymology is creative when it forms something new out of something which it does not understand.

An explanation still has to be found for a large number of poems which transcend Brockes' ordinary banal style. I would suggest one method of composition which Brockes might have adopted. Throughout this study I have shown how certain poems, especially the scientific ones, consisted of commonplaces from the works of certain theologians and scientists. I have also suggested that Brockes used basic pictures such as the Virgilian storm, Burnet's frightful mountains and final conflagration which he developed imaginatively. It seems probable that the poem "Die Berge" could have arisen in this way.

I have already shown that half of "Die Berge" comes from the theological-scientific background and that the other half comes from Thomas Burnet. The two worlds are diametrically opposed. One is based on the premise that the world is perfect, the other on the view that the world is defective on account of the fall of man. Yet Brockes brings in both views without being aware of any contradiction. It seems as if, having decided to write a poem about mountains, he had introduced

everything he knew about them. Writers like Ray and Derham, when writing about mountains kept to their background of science and theology. In fact it was their opposition to Burnet's theory which provoked their arguments. Yet Brockes brings the rival camps together in one poem. By transferring Burnet into the eighteenth-century context of the sublime with its interest in the wild aspects of nature, Brockes is creative. This may be partially accidental but, when he deals with potentially sublime subjects, Brockes writes with such vitality that one suspects his imagination has been kindled. He even outdoes his sources. The most important storm poem, "Die auf ein starckes Ungewitter erfolgte Stille," illustrates this point, as Brockes creates an imaginary storm which is fiercer than any real storm could be. At the same time, the other Brockes emerges at the end of the storm to rescue his peasants and maintain his belief in God's goodness. This Brockes believes in harsh cruel winters as long as they are dominated by a merciful God who provides firewood and furs.

The other half of "Die Berge" consists of a versification of most of the scientific ideas about mountains and of the theological arguments about their usefulness. Brockes' method here consists of bringing relevant motifs together. I have suggested that he uses the same method for many of his more literary poems also and shall discuss this later.

Just how creative Brockes was in his use of Burnet is apparent when we compare "Die Berge" with the

descriptive section of Albrecht von Haller's "Die Alpen" (1728).¹ Haller's poem is mainly concerned with the virtues of country life and is didactic in tone. The utilitarian view of mountains predominates:

Der Bergen ewig Eiß, der Felsen steile Wände,
Sind selbst zum Nutzen da, und tränken das Gelände.
(p. 26)

It is more of a calm beauty which Haller depicts; the mountains are not frightening and sublime:

Wenn Titans erster Strahl der Felsen Höh' vergüldet,
Und sein verklärter Blick die Nebel unterdrückt,
So wird, was die Natur am prächtigsten gebildet,
Von dem erhobnen Sitz von einem Berg erblickt.
Durch den zerfahrenen Dunst von einer dünnen Wolke,
Eröffnet sich im nu das Schauspiel einer Welt,
Der weite Aufenthalt von mehr als einem Volke,
Zeigt alles auf einmahl, was sein Bezirk enthält.
Ein sanfter Schwindel schließt die allzuschwachen Augen,
Die den zu fernem Kreiß nicht zu durchstrahlen taugen.
(pp. 26-27)

Although an attempt has been made to suggest a wide perspective, the reader is not given the sensation of vastness which Brockes' poem gives. The emotions are quite mild compared to those expressed in "Die Berge." "Ein sanfter Schwindel" bears no comparison with the experience of "Seelenschwindel" which Brockes has described in many poems. In this mountain poem the emphasis is on the mixed emotions of "Furcht und Grauen." Haller is observing and describing what he sees:

Ein angenehm Gemisch von Bergen, Fels und Seen
Fällt nach und nach erbleicht, doch deutlich ins
Gesicht,
Die graue Ferne schließt, ein Kranz beglänzter Höhen,
Worauf ein schwarzer Wald die letzten Strahlen bricht.

¹Haller und Salis-Seewis Auswahl, ed. A. Frey in Deutsche National-Litteratur, general ed. Joseph Kürschner, vol. XLI., Pt. 2, pp. 26-28.

Bald zeigt ein nah Gebürg die sanfft erhobnen Hügel,
Wovon ein laut Geblök im Thale wiederhallt.
Bald scheint ein breiter See ein meilen=langer
Spiegel,
Auf dessen glatter Flut ein zitternd Feuer wallt.
Bald aber öffnet sich ein Strich begrünter Thälern,
Die hin und her gekrümmt sich im entfernen schmälern.

Brockes emphasizes the vast height of the mountains and
the "steile Höh'n" touching heaven itself:

So entsetzlich sind die Höhen,
Die bald steil, bald rauh, bald glatt,
Daß der Blick von vielem Sehen,
Und so ferner Reise, matt,
Kaum zum Gipfel kann gelangen,
Die, wenn sie voll Wolcken hangen,
Nach dem blöden Augen=Schein
Selbst des Himmels Stützen seyn.
(stanza 5)

The next stanza of "Die Alpen" is mainly concerned with
the rich pastures, ripening grain and the cattle, as is
Brockes' stanza 20, which belongs to the utilitarian
half of his poem. Haller's first lines give a better
impression of mountains:

Dort senkt ein kahler Berg die glatten Wände nieder,
Den ein verjährtes Eiß dem Himmel gleich gethürmt...

But Brockes treats the same subjects more powerfully.
He captures the timelessness and permanence of the
mountains:

So viel Jahre, so viel Zeiten
Nagen auf der Berge Rumpf:
Doch wird auf den schroffen Seiten
Der Verwesungs=Zahn selbst stumpf,
Und es will ihr steifer Rücken
Sich vor keiner Aend'rung bücken:
Aller Elementen Macht
Wird von ihnen nichts geacht't.

The last stanza of Haller's descriptive section introduces
more movement:

description, Brockes ventures into the realm of the imagination in the footsteps of his guide Burnet. He sees caves with bears, wolves, owls and snakes, and he imagines the destruction of the earth with its ruined mountains to be caused by fire and flood.

The sources of "Die Berge" and what I have shown concerning Brockes' use of them should tell us something about Brockes' writing methods. Another poem which arouses curiosity is the "Kirschblüte."

Kirschblüte bei der Nacht

- Ich sahe mit betrachtendem Gemüthe
Jüngst einen Kirschbaum, welcher blühte,
In kühler Nacht beym Mondenschein;
Ich glaubt', es könne nichts von größrer Weisse seyn.
5 Es schien, ob wär' ein Schnee gefallen.
Ein jeder, auch der kleinste, Ast
Trug gleichsam eine schwere Last
Von zierlich weissen runden Ballen.
Es ist kein Schwan so weiß, da nämlich jedes Blatt,
10 Indem daselbst des Mondes sanftes Licht
Selbst durch die zarten Blätter bricht,
So gar den Schatten weiß und sonder Schwärze hat.
Unmöglich, dacht ich, kann auf Erden
Was Weissers angetroffen werden.
15 Indem ich nun bald hin und bald
Im Schatten dieses Baumes gehe;
Sah'ich von ungefähr
Durch alle Blumen in die Höhe,
Und ward noch einen weissern Schein,
20 Der tausendmal so weiß, der tausendmal so klar,
Fast halb darob erstaunt, gewahr.
Der Blüte Schnee schien schwarz zu seyn
Bei diesem weissen Glanz. Es fiel mir ins Gesicht
Von einem hellen Stern ein weisses Licht,
25 Das mir recht in die Seele strahlte.
Wie sehr ich mich am Irdischen ergetze,
Dacht'ich, hat Gott dennoch weit größre Schätze.
Die größte Schönheit dieser Erden
Kann mit der himmlischen doch nicht verglichen werden.
(II, 38)

The components of this poem are found in many other poems by Brockes. The direct observation implied in line 1--"Ich sahe ...jüngst..." is very common, and it is probably phrases like this which have gained for Brockes his reputation of sitting in his garden describing what he sees. "Die wächserne Anatomie" begins: "Ich sahe jüngst, mit fast erstauntem Blick..." (Metzler, p. 425). "Die Rose" (Metzler, p. 61) has the same beginning. "Erbauliche Betrachtung schnell=vergehender Wolcken" (Metzler, p. 429) starts with the words: "Ich sitze hier und seh...." Line 3--Brockes frequently writes about "kühle Nacht" and "Mondenschein." Lines 4, 13-14--"Der Winter" describes falling snow: "Da doch, so bald er auf der Erden,/Nichts weissers kann gefunden werden" (Metzler, p. 444). Blossoms are compared to snow, and branches bear their weight in "Der Garten"--"die schwancken Zweige krümmet/Der Bluhmen süsse Last"; "Auf allen Aesten scheint ein Wunder=Schnee zu liegen..." (Metzler, p. 92); "...Manch Aestgen, so beschneit,/ Wird durch der regen Füss' und Flügel Munterkeit/Von seiner weissen Last befreyt" (p. 446). In this case the "Last" really refers to snow and not to blossoms, but it is easy to see that a certain imaginative picture comes into Brockes' mind whenever he thinks of snow and blossoms. Brockes uses the same expression "süsse Last" of blossoms in "Die Blühte". Line 8--he sees blossoms as round balls. In "Die Rose" flowers are "Kügelchen" (p. 62). Line 9--The whiteness is whiter than a swan. In "Der Winter" snowflakes are like feathers (p. 443). Blossoms are like feathers in "Die Blühte": „So gleichen

sie/Beweglich=wallenden Schnee=weissen Federbüschen."

It is typical of this kind of poem that Brockes walks around (lines 15-16) in order to observe from different points of view and that he looks at light through foliage--"Die Allee" (p. 248), "Schönheit der zur Abend=Zeit hinter einem Gebüsche hervorstrahlenden Sonne" (p. 291). It is as if he cannot see light without shadow or darkness, and many of his poems describe the interplay of both. Seen from different angles the blossoms in "Die Blüte" are bright or dark: „Die Schatten selbst sind weiss, das Dunckle selbst ist helle." In "Der Winter" Brockes watches the snow; there is nothing whiter on the ground (p. 444). When he looks up at it as it falls, it seems to be black. Line 25--Brockes' sense impressions penetrate his soul. "Betrachtung der Vögel" (p. 260)--"Da uns die Lieblichkeit der süssen Stimmen rührt,/Und uns recht in die Seele dringet...." What he takes in through the eye goes to the soul (p. 357). Line 25 makes a pleasing use of this idea by remaining within the imagery of rays of light and expressing the emotional reaction in a restrained way. One tires of Brockes' habitual over-working of the words "Ergetzen," "rühren," and "entzücken." The ending is also harmonious and restrained. In too many other poems it is a mere moral lesson with almost a forced relationship to the rest of the poem. This time it is fully related to the star and the light from above which are brighter than the blossoms below. The same idea in an expanded and less effective form is found in "Der Winter" (p. 444).

Allein,
Des Himmels heller Glantz und noch viel weissers
Licht

Giebt von der Ursach' Unterricht,
Daß, gegen seinen Glantz, der schönsten Körper
Pracht

Nur Schatten, Finsterniß und Nacht.

Aria.

Die irdische Schönheit, der Körper Vollkommenheit,
Sind herrlich, doch gegen das Himmlische nichts,
Sind schwartz, in Vergleichung des ewigen Lichts,
Sind dunckel nur, gegen der Seeligen Herrlichkeit.

"Kirschblüte bei der Nacht" has a unity and delicacy which is astonishing for Brockes. One wonders whether the success was fortuitous. As I have shown, the elements comprising the poem were all present in Brockes' mind before he wrote the poem and I should like to suggest that he achieved this success by a process of motif-variation. This is another hypothesis which is perhaps difficult to confirm, but some space will be devoted to the way in which Brockes varied motifs in his poetry.

Brockes persistently emphasizes the need to look at God's creation. It is a sin and an insult to God if we are indifferent:

Wers Geschöpfe nicht betracht't,
Schändet seines Schöpfers Macht.
(Metzler, p. 638)

We have been given ears and eyes for this purpose, and Brockes points out that, if we do not honour the donor, "Ihr seydt nicht des Gesichts, nicht eurer Ohren, werth." But we seem reluctant:

Doch, leider! wär' die Welt auch noch so schön,
So scheint's, wir schämten uns, sie anzusehn.
(Metzler, p. 314)

Many poems are accordingly the fruit of

observation. The "Kirschblüte" is based on an observation of blossoms by moonlight. The following lines represent the observation of the effects of sunlight:

Man schauet, wie das Feld, Busch, Stauden und
Gesträuch,
Im heitern Strahl der Guld'nen Sonnen,
Mit Fäden, die gezog'nem Silber gleich,
Als zarten Netzen, übersponnen.
(p. 314)

But the original observation, by means of images, takes on an imaginative form. The images are gold, silver, threads and spun webs or nets and these are varied in different poems. When Brockes observes light shining through foliage or through the clouds, or snow falling during a storm, he sees it as streaks and lines. Falling snow is described by means of variations of these basic images and becomes "ein weisser Strom," "Weisser Rauch," "ein strenger Strich," "Schmauch," "Schaum," "Stäubchen," "sichtbare Linien." I have already discussed these points in connection with Janssen's thesis and Addison's essays on the imagination (Above, pp. 272ff.)

There are passages of short descriptions in many poems which reveal that Brockes has really observed what he is describing before he launches out into variations on the description and the reflections which it conjures up. "Der Winter" is particularly rich as we have seen. After a description of snow, Brockes turns to hoar-frost:

Des Reifen zartes Eis
Zeugt ein verwirrt Gespinnst, ein ungewisses Weiß
Auf Hecken, Busch und Baum.
.....
Auch auf den allerdünnsten Zweigen
Sieht man ein schimmernd Mooß im rauhen Schmuck sich
zeigen.

Aria.

Starrer Dornen verwilderte Hecken
Scheinen itzo verzuckert und weiß;
Alle Wipfel der Bäume bedecken
Silber=farbene Flocken und Eis.

So gar an sonst unsichtbar'n Spinneweben
Sieht man den rauhen Reifen kleben,
Sie hängen gantz verdickt an weisser Bäume Cronen,
Wie kleine silberne Festonen,
Die Bäume sehen rauh und kraus,
Ja fast uncörperlich, durchsichtig, luftig aus.

Thorn hedges and spider's webs occur in other poems. The webs are covered with dew and look like pearls. Brockes associates wildness and sometimes horror with "verwirrte Dornen=Hecken,/Die voller Furcht und Grauen stecken,/Mit klauen=gleichen Stacheln..." (Metzler, p. 231).

We are told that "Der rauhe Dorn=Strauch ließ, wie scharfe Klauen,/Die spitze Schaar der starren Stacheln schauen" (p. 441).¹ They constitute a threat which God's goodness averts:

Starre Dornen, rauhe Hecken,
Würden nur den Erden-Kreis
Mit verwirrten Stacheln decken,
Liesse GOTT aus Seinen Tieffen
Nicht des Segens Regen trieffen.
Ihm allein sey Ruhm und Preis!
(Metzler, p. 15)

In the forest, Brockes notices the light of the sun shining through the leaves:

Wenn ich von unten in die Höhe
Des Himmels funckelnden Sapphir,
Durch der Smaragd'nen Blätter Zier,
Bestrahlt durch's Gold der Sonne, sehe;
So lenck' ich billig Hertz und Sinn
Zum Schöpfer aller Schönheit hin.
(Metzler, p. 222)

¹ Another example: Metzler, p. 219.

He describes the moss-covered trees:

Ein grüner Sammt von Mooß verhüllt die alten Stämme
Meist da, woselbst der strenge Nord
Die rauhe Rinde trifft. Es dringen lockre Schwämme
Durch knorrichtes Gewächs, an manchem Ort.
Wer dieß, so Schwämm' als Mooß, mit Ernst, beschaut,
Der wird, Verwund'rungs-voll, auf alten Rinden,
Gebüsch, Stauden, Laub und Kraut,
Ja gantze kleine Wälder finden.
(p. 222)

When Brockes describes trees in blossom, he does so by a process of association. Blossoms remind him of snow, feathers, wool and balls. These are interchangeable so that when he thinks of snow he thinks of blossoms. In the poem "Der Garten" he looks at different kinds of blossoms and asks:

Gleicht ihrer Blumen lieblichs Prangen
Nicht Gärten, die in Lüften hangen?
Ist nicht der kleinste Zweig ein grosser Blumen=
Strauß?
(Metzler, p. 93)

The wind blows the blossoms around like a "Silber=weisser Regen." The whole atmosphere is alive; they are like birds: "Die Luft ist selbst ein weites Vogel-Haus." Brockes describes the floral patterns formed by the falling blossoms on the surface of a pond:

Die klare, grünlich=dunckle Fluht,
Die in des Teiches Ufers Schooß,
Bekröntzt mit Mooß,
An schlancker Bäume Wurtzeln ruht,
Auf deren eb'nen Fläch' ein kühler Schatten schwimmt,
Wird unvermuthet hell, und glimmet
In einer weissen Gluth.
Oft läßt es recht, als ob, uns doppelt zu ergetzen,
Die Blätter sich aufs neu zusammen setzen,
Wodurch sie denn noch mehr das dunckle Wasser zieren,
Und neue Blumen drauf formiren.
Es scheinen Wasser, Büsch' und Hecken,
Es scheinen Kräuter, Beeten, Gänge,
Als wenn sie riechender Schnee=weisser Flocken Menge,
Und weisse Rosen=Blätter decken.
(Metzler, pp. 94-95)

shines and sparkles (p. 275). Rivers and streams reflect like mirrors and rock-crystal (pp. 17-19). Moonlight and dawn bathe nature in varying light. He observes it from all points, above, below, in the distance, close at hand and through foliage. "Der Morgen" studies the effect of sunrise on the surrounding world:

Es glänzt die reine Luft, es glüht die glatte Fluht
(Wenn da, wo sie sich reg't, viel göld'ne Blitze
schwimmen,
Und, wie geschür'te Kohlen, glimmen)
In einer weißlich=blauen Gluht.
In dunkel=blauer stehn entfernte Hügel,
In einer rothen, rothe Ziegel,
So wie in einem grauen Schein
Beschildte Hütten, Holtz und Stein.
In den bestrahl'ten Blumen flammen
Gluht, Farben, Glantz und Schein zusammen.
(Metzler, pp. 77-78)

The colour analysis continues.

This is description such as I have not seen in any poetry of the period. There is something baroque about it, but it is adapted to the new attitude to the imagination as expressed by Addison and also to the growing interest in the vastness of the sublime. In these poems Brockes starts with the description, perhaps of something which he is observing such as a flower, but soon he is soaring in imagination to the stars. One expanse reminds him of another and he describes one in terms of the other. Flowers are like stars:

Sie scheinen, an Gestalt und Schimmer, kleine Sterne,
In tausendfachem Glantz und Schein,
Am grünen Firmament zu seyn.
(p. 14)

Roses are like moons:

Wie kleine Monden, glänzt die Schaar
Der Rosen, die schon gantz geöffnet war,
Indem die, so noch halb geschlossen sitzen,

Gleich Sternen erster Grösse, blitzen.
Die andern, die in gröss'rer Zahl,
Mit einem fünf=getheilten Strahl,
Durch noch geschloss'ne Knospen, funckeln;
Scheint eine weit entleg'ne Ferne,
Wie droben, in der Luft, die meisten Sterne,
Theils zu verkleinern, theils auch zu verdunckeln...
(Metzler, p. 72)

The sea when it is calm is like a mirror, but when the wind disturbs its surface it is like hilly country. First, the wind breaks up the smooth water into "kleine Schuppen" and the sun is reflected in each of these:

Wann nun, auf sanft=bewegter Fluht,
Die Strahlen von der Sonnen=Gluht,
Wie tausend kleine Sonnen, glimmen,
Und auf den kurtzen Wellen schwimmen,
In ungezählter Meng', als kleine Blitz', entstehn...
(p. 19)

Then "Es bilden des Wassers sanft=wallende Hügel/Viel tausend polirte bewegliche Spiegel..." (p. 20). In a storm the sea is like mountains and valleys:

Dort sieht man Berge schnell sich neigen,
Dort tiefe Thäler plötzlich steigen.
(Betrachtung wallender Wasser=Wogen, p. 427)

A cornfield is a "gelbes Aeren=Meer" which "Wellen gleich, sich sencket, bald sich hebet" (p. 134). It is full of movement:

Man kann der Aeren spielend Wallen,
Wie sie sich sanft erheben, wieder fallen,
Bald wieder in die Höhe steigen,
Bald schweben, bald sich wieder neigen,
Bald für sich selber fliehen, bald sich jagen,
Bald wirbelnd sich im Kreise drehn,
Nicht sonder Lust, nicht ohne Freude, sehn.
(p. 164)

The richness of Brockes' imagination is further illustrated in his poems about clouds. "Der Wolcken= und Luft=Himmel" depicts the sky as a vast stage on which the scenes are constantly changing. Brockes describes a

series of pictures formed by different colours and light effects. He sees a mountain in the clouds:

Ein Berg, der dunckelgrau,
Lässt dort, auf Purpur=farb'nen Spitzen,
Den äussern Rand, wie reines Silber, blitzen,
Den der sapphirne Grund noch eins so helle macht.
Ein güld'ner Umstrich schmückt, in ungemeiner Pracht,
So manchen dunckel=braunen Kreis.
Roth, Purpur, Leibfarb, blau, grau, grünlich, gelb
und weiß
Erfüllt und ziert, im angestrahnten Duft
Der Wolcken, jetzt die reine Luft.

(Metzler, p. 150)

After that, he describes a golden sea with many islands, many strange creatures, dragons and whales. There is a giant surrounded by dwarfs, turreted castles and vast armies. "Die, durch eine schöne Landschaft in der Luft, vermehrte Schönheit einer irdischen Landschaft" deals with the same subject:

Der Himmel schien bemüht, durch manchen Wolcken=Strich,
Bald hohe Berge, flache Felder,
Bald niedre Büsche, dicke Wälder,
Ja bald ein Meer voll kleiner güld'ner Wellen,
Bald Thier' und Vögel vorzustellen.
Die Farben nun der zierlichen Figuren,
Von allen diesen Creaturen,
Sind Purpur, Silber, Gold, Carmin.

(Metzler, p. 143)

Many of Brockes' poems are repetitive. They are variations on the same images. One image can be taken over into another poem and transferred into another context. Ideas can be abridged or expanded according to the requirements of the subject. For instance, the group of subjects developed in detail in the poems on the "Sonne" and "Die Berge" (utilitarian aspect) are found in skeleton form in "Betrachtung des Mondscheins" (Metzler, pp. 660-670) and "Sonntagslied" (VIII, 399) respectively.

To what extent this practice of motif-variation is an intellectual game it is impossible to decide conclusively. More evidence is necessary about the way in which Brockes transforms traditional material and about his expression of feeling.

In Brockes' poetry there is some personification in the old manner. One of the sun's activities is to produce "lauter Wunder=Kinder" ("Wenn du uns den Tag verlängerst:/Spür't man, wie du Berg und Thal,/Durch dein männlichs Feuer, schwängerst;" from "Die Sonne" stanza 13; the same idea is in Du Bartas).¹ The next example is still a little artificial:

Sie [the characters in the poem] sah'n die Blumen,
auf den Hügeln,
Sich theils in eig'nem Schmuck verliebt bespiegeln;
Theils sahen sie, um sich zu träncken,
Die Blumen in die Fluth die bunten Häupter sencken.
(Metzler, p. 216)

Generally speaking, Brockes succeeds in using personification more naturally. There is sometimes a charm about his treatment of plants and animals. He talks to them and they reply.² In the poem "Die Heerde=Kühe" (II, 201) Brockes addresses a cow which is being milked as "Liebstes Vieh" and explains to it the miracle of how grass becomes milk. The poem "Der wilde Rosen=Strauch" (II, 203) reminds us of Blake's "Lamb":

Bewunderungswerther Strauch, wo kommst du her?
Wer setzte, pflanzte und pflegte dich?

¹Other examples: Metzler, p. 113; II, 458.

²"Die redende Bluhme," Metzler, pp. 109-110.

The following passage from "Der Sommer" (Metzler, p. 138) prepares the way for Goethe's "Wie glänzt die Sonne! Wie lacht die Flur!"

Den gantzen Erden-Kreis beseel't und wärmt die Sonne.
Vor Freuden lacht das Feld, es wallt das Gras vor
Wonne.

Brockes also transforms the traditional nightingale motif and we are sometimes reminded of Brentano's "Der Spinnerin Lied" which makes an even more personal use of it. Brockes writes in one poem:

Im Garten hört' ich jüngst den süß=und scharfen
Schall
Der feurig schlagenden verliebten Nachtigall.
Ich ward dadurch gerührt, gereitzt, ergetzet,
Und, durch den reinen Klang, fast aus mir selbst
gesetzt.
Ich horcht' aufmercksam zu, wie lieblich, süß und
hell,
Wie scharf, wie rein, wie rund, wie hohl, wie tief,
wie schnell,
Sie Stimm' und Ton formirt...
(p. 85)

Brockes associates the very word "nightingale" with the joy of spring:

Es scheint so gar der Nam' allein
Ein Inbegriff der Frühlings=Lust zu seyn.
Wenn etwa jemand spricht: es sang die Nachtigall;
Kann fast des blossen Wortes Schall
So viel zu wircken taugen,
Daß in der meisten Hörer Augen
Sich ein geheim Vergnügen zeigt.
(p. 28)

Brockes' poems are very uneven and although there are comparatively few flawless poems, good sections are scattered throughout. Several poems deal with the ideal country scene reminiscent of Virgil and his imitators, but Brockes often manages to present them in a more natural homely garb than the Augustan poets in England,

who were concerned with rules and propriety.¹ Brockes, to begin with, is not handicapped by heavy poetic diction and Latinisms. (This is strange, since his autobiography is overloaded with Latinisms.) Brockes calls a spade a spade and does not hesitate to talk of sweat. He talks of the farmer "der beym Pfluge schwitzet" (p. 309), and of the reaper's "beschwitzte Faust" (p. 132).

There are several poems about life in the country in the different seasons at different times of day, which describe the work of the fields and grazing animals. They are very like Gay's Rural Sports (1713, half of canto I) which itself was inspired by Virgil's Georgics. The resemblance is not so great that one would be justified in regarding it as Brockes' direct source. But it may well have stimulated him to invent similar rural pictures. However this may be, Brockes not only simplifies the style and spirit but adds very definite emotional reactions.

Gay's peasant cuts the grass:

The labourer with a bending scythe is seen,
Shaving the surface of the waving green;
Of all her native pride disrobes the land,
And meads lays waste before his sweeping hand...²

Brockes' picture is not only more lively but it is part of a greater action, the harmony of the countryside dependent on the changing seasons with its provision

¹James Sutherland, A Preface to eighteenth Century Poetry (Oxford, 1948), p. 87 reports Johnson's criticism of Shakespeare's vulgar language. William Hamilton refines King Lear's words--"Thou owest the worm no silk" as "For thee, the skilful worm, of specious hue,/No shining threads of ductile radiance drew;"

²The Works of the English Poets, ed. Samuel Johnson (London, 1810) vol. X.

for man's needs. Brockes describes "ein reifes Feld,/ Worauf der Bauern muntre Schaar/Mit Mähen theils, und theils mit Binden/Beschäftigt war...." The work is hard but the workers are happy:

Die Schnitter erndteten, die Scheunen anzufüllen,
Der Aecker gelben Schmuck, mit sauren Freuden, ein;
Man sah so manchen Bach, von lauem Schweisse, quillen;
Die Sensen blitzeten, es rauschte jeder Hieb,
Wenn die beschwitzte Faust ihn durch die Halmen trieb.
Hier band, dort lud man auf; kaum konnten grosse Wagen
Das raschelnde Gewicht gebund'ner Garben tragen.
Die Achse seufzt und knarrt; der Fuhr=Mann klatscht,
und schwingt
Die schlanke Geissel um; indem er fröhlich singt,
Verdoppelt er die Kraft der weiß=beschäumten Pferde.
Sie ziehn; der Boden beb't: es zittert selbst die
Erde,
Gedrückt von eigener Frucht.

(Der Sommer, pp. 132-133)

There is a similar picture in Brockes' "Hirten=Gedicht" and "Man hört den muntern Fuhr=Mann singen,/ Aus einer Sorgen=losen Brust..." (p. 165). There is a tendency to idealize the countryman which is true to the tradition. The work is not as hard as it looks: "So gar das Pflügen selbst, wie mühsam es auch scheint,/Hegt mehr Vergnügen, als man meynt" (p. 163).

The observation of these rural activities produces an emotional reaction which is expressed by such words as "gerührt," "vergnügt," "ruhig und vergnügt," "Anmuth," and "inniglich vergnüget." At the same time it must be remembered that it is not just the farmers' work and the pleasant season which inspire such feelings but the bounty and utility which are displayed. Brockes observes there "Die Schätze der Natur/Und den, der sie gemacht, die Urquell aller Welt,/Der sie so wunderbar erschaffen und erhält,/In ihrer Zier und Nutzbarkeit...." "Nutz"

is part of Brockes' view of nature but it is not cold and pragmatic; "Nutz und Schmuck" are part of a web of ideas which produce feeling.

Gay devotes two lines to the picture of cows waiting to be milked: "When the big-uddered cows with patience stand,/Waiting the strokings of the damsel's hand...." Brockes makes an almost too realistic picture out of this situation in the poem "Der Mittag":

Er [Licidas] sah, bey mehr, als funfzig Kühen,
Um aus den Eutern Milch zu ziehen,
Geschäftt'ge Melckerinnen sitzen.
Er sah, die fette Milch in strengen Strahlen spritzen,
Daß Muld' und Eimer schäumt. Dieß sprudelnde Getön,
Zusamt dem murmelnden Getöse, so das Vieh,
Mit wiederkäuenden, nie stillen Mäulern, machte,
Schien eine sanft gedämpfte Harmonie,
Und klang recht angenehm und schön.
(p. 208)

The experience stimulates thought rather than feeling. Licidas draws the lesson of the peaceful life from this episode and compares discontented man to the contented cattle.

The picture of the hay-makers which follows this scene is also realistic. Licidas smells the hay and watches the activity "mit innigem Vergnügen." Brockes is in the scene experiencing the sights and sounds around him and reacting to them. Gay's poem was more literary and objective. Brockes' Licidas catches "den Geruch vom erst gemachten Heu,/Wovon die frische Süßigkeit/Ihm Nase, Hirn und Hertz erfreut'." He watches the hay being stacked and describes how the workers with heavily laden pitchforks resemble moving heaps and trees: "Das grüne Heu, auf dünner Gabeln Stämmen,/Schnell laufenden belaubten Bäumen

Das helle Grün beblühter Wiesen, am Fusse dunckel=
grüner Wälder;
Hier streckt, von kleinen Büschen, sich
Ein langer grüner Strich hingegen, durch Aeren=
schwäng're gelbe Felder.
(Metzler, p. 159)

This atmosphere is broken by a certain amount of moralizing, hymnic passages and illustrations of God's wisdom and power. There is another passage which is really a variation of earlier motifs. In it the sound of the cattle and sheep, as they lie in the long grass chewing the cud, is combined with the description of the frothy milk squirting into buckets.

There is a passage in "Der Mittag" which captures a peaceful atmosphere:

Die dünne Luft war klar und rein,
Es blinckt' und glühte Holtz und Stein,
Es glänzt' und strahlte Berg und Thal,
In unbeschreiblicher gantz lichter Herrlichkeit,
Durch den geraden Sonnen-Strahl...
(Metzler, p. 207)

In the poem "Der Sommer" there is also a descriptive passage which is really something more than description:

Man konnte hie und da, auf den sonst eb'nen Flächen,
Viel schnell erhabene, den Wellen gleiche Höh'n,
In reichen Garben-Hügeln sehn,
Die, wenn sie güld'ne Sonnen-Strahlen
Früh Ost= und Abends West=wärts malen,
Viel dunckle Linien, auf hellem Grunde,
Früh West= und Abends Ost=wärts ziehn.
Daher das helle Feld, durch zierlich=dunckle Striche,
Dem schönsten Perspective gliche.
(p. 137)

This passage is followed by more description. I know of no other European writer who has produced so much descriptive poetry as early as 1721.

Most of these rural descriptions are narrowly

bound up with an emotional reaction. Although it is generally reported in the third person in this pastoral form, the question of emotion requires some consideration. Several critics have attempted to study Brockes' "Naturgefühl." To what extent it is possible to study a subject of this kind will now have to be examined.

Generally speaking, the type of emotion aroused by the contemplation of country scenes is fairly constant in Brockes poetry. Brockes asks:

Und wer kann, ohne Freud' und inniges Bewegen,
Den uns vom Himmel selbst geschenckten Segen
Hier annoch stehn, da binden, dorten mäh'n,
Hier in die Scheuren fahren sehn?
(p. 165)

"Das Kletten-Kraut" (VIII, 110-113, Tübingen; Hamburg, pp. 128 ff.) arouses religious feelings:

Ich fühlte, wie mein Geist zu einer Stille kam.
Die unbeschreiblich süß. Mich füllt' und übernahm
Ein rein Vergnügen, eine Lust,
Die denen nur, die Gott sich nahn, bewußt.

Ein sanftes Feuer, voll einer Gluth,
Die aus Bewundrung und Andacht stammte,
Begeisterte, bewege't und beflammte
Mein für Vergnügen wallend Blut.

The emotions described in the poem "Der Morgen" (pp. 75-79) are calm at first and correspond to the peace of the early morning as the sun rises over the mountains and tree-tops and the birds begin to sing. As the sun rises higher like a monarch who "Mit Gluth und Glantz gekrön't, das weite Firmament,/Das unergründlich tief, das keine Grentzen kennt,/In stiller Majestät beherrschet und erfüllet..." the poem moves into the sphere of Platonism. First, there is a series of variations on "ein Ocean von Gluth," in which the

interplay of colour, light and shade is very well depicted, then the emotional reaction is described in detail:

Hierdurch nun breitet sich, durch meine gantze Brust
Ein süß= und schnelles Feur sonst nie gespür'ter
Lust,
In meinem wallenden begeisterten Geblüte
Und allen Sehnen aus. Hiedurch beweg't, entzückt,
Gantz ausser mir vor Lust, erheb't sich mein Gemüthe,
Besingt in ihrem Strahl, in ihrer Wunder=Pracht,
Mit unterbrochenen, vor Lust verwirrten, Worten
Den GOTT, der bloß aus Lieb', Erbarmung, Huld und Güte
Die Sonne leuchten ließ, die Welt an allen Orten
So herrlich ausgeschmückt, so wunderschön gemacht;
Sein unausdrücklich's Lob nimmt meine Sinnen ein,
Und werd' ich (durch den unerschaffnen Schein
Von seiner Herrlichkeit noch immer mehr gerühret)
Zu einer höheren Betrachtung aufgeführt....
(p. 78)

Since the beautiful world can give us so much happiness,
how much more must departed spirits experience. This
thought is linked to the new attitude to space, to the
"Strahlen=reichen Morgen=Glantz/Von so viel tausend
Sonnen=Lichtern,/In hundert tausend Welten...." (p. 79)

The experience of space is usually associated with
ecstatic emotion as we have already noted.¹ The following
example is representative:

Ich fühle, daß mein angeflammter Geist
Dem gross= und kleinen Kreis der Erde sich entreisst,
Zugleich sich in die Tief' ohn' End' und Anfang neiget,
Zugleich auch in die Höh' ohn' End' und Grentzen steigt.
Ein feur'ger Andachts=Trieb
Versetzt mich in die Ewigkeit.
Mein denckend Wesen breitet sich
In's ungemessne Sternen=Haus,
Vor Ehrfurcht stumm, vor Lust erstaunet, aus.
(Die himmlische Schrift, p. 115)

¹"Die Sonne" has several examples of this kind of emotion.
Above, pp. 165-167.

It can be said that the emotional reaction is related to the subject. When the "Hirten=Gedicht" deals with pastoral scenes we read expressions such as "mit inniglich=gerührten Blicken," "mit Entzücken," "mit ruhigem Gemüth," "mit Ehrfurcht, Lust und Andacht," "wahre Freude," "innerlichs Vergnügen," "gereizt und bewogen," and "Freud' und inniges Bewegen." The emotional vocabulary changes when Brockes considers the mysterious forces at work in nature as exemplified in plants and seeds. "Wie groß ist dieß Geheimniß nicht,/Das in des Samens Wesen steckt...." (p. 168) The reaction is expressed in this passage:

Wohin sich auch mein Sinnen lencket,
Wie tief sich meine Seele sencket,
Je mehr sie hin und wieder dencket,
Was doch der Samen eigentlich:
Je mehr, je mehr verlier' ich mich.
(p. 167)

Mixed feelings of "Lust" and "Entsetzen" occur in sublime contexts such as the infinity of the heavens, the vast sea and the forest. Man feels himself "Von einer frohen Angst, von einer bangen Lust/Geklemmt, gedruckt, gepresst." The following expressions are frequently used-- "Schrecken," "grausam," "ein heiligs Grauen," "schreckendes Vergnügen," "von einer frohen Angst." These feelings are often accompanied by "Seelen=Schwindel."

"Die schnelle Veränderung," which we discussed earlier is very successfully built on suspense. The beautiful world is suddenly transformed into a world of darkness. We are led to expect some apocalyptic catastrophe, but eventually we are told that the dramatic change occurred when the poet closed his eyes. This

explanation seems to be somewhat of an anticlimax, but before passing judgment, we must consider the serious idea on which it is based. Locke had maintained that our mind is a tabula rasa, dependent on sense impressions for the material for reflexion and experience. Brockes is very aware of the importance of the senses, and it is perhaps this idea more than any other which has provided the basis for his view of experience.¹ When he closes his eyes, his experience is cut off:

Mein GOTT! rief ich so gleich, ist dieses wohl zu
glauben?

Vermag ein wenig Haut
Mir, was Dein' Allmachts=Hand gebaut,
Des Himmels Licht, der Erden Pracht zu rauben?
Vermag sie mich von Millionen Freuden,
Ja gleichsam selber von der Welt,
Von aller Pracht, so sie enthält,
Und zwar so Wunder=schnell, zu scheiden?
(Metzler, p. 356)

Brockes emphasizes the importance of sense experience because our spiritual experience depends on it:

Der gantze Leib sieht nichts von allem, was die Welt
Vor Pracht, vor Wunder, Glantz und Schönheit in sich
hält.
Ob sie uns gleich umgeben und umringen,
Wofern sie nicht durchs Aug' uns in die Seele dringen.
(p. 357)

Sense experience then leads to emotional and spiritual experience. This idea determines the way in which Brockes expresses emotion.

¹"Die Erde," stanza 43, Metzler, p. 579. Brockes' knowledge of the theories of perception are to be found in a scientific poem of 158 stanzas called "Die fünf Sinne," Metzler, pp. 606-658. It is particularly relevant to the present subject. All knowledge is derived from the senses. Impressions go from the eye to the brain (stanza 3); the senses provide a link with the spiritual world: "Durch das Auge können Seelen/Mit dem Himmel sich vermählen..." (st. 4). A similar idea is expressed in the poem "Das herrliche Schauspiel der Natur": "Unleugbar ist es, daß die Seelen,/Bloß durch die Werkzeug' unsrer Sinnen,/Sich mit der ganzen Welt vermählen..." (VIII, 170, Tübingen; Hamburg, p. 197).

Emotion is experienced physically at first then leads upwards to God. This is demonstrated by the passage which I quoted earlier.¹ Brockes is moved by the beauty of light:

Hierdurch nun breitet sich, durch meine gantze Brust
Ein süß= und schnelles Feur sonst nie gespür'ter
Lust,
In meinem wallenden begeisterten Geblüte
Und allen Sehnen aus....

(p. 78)

This raises his spirits and leads him to even higher emotion as he thinks of the Creator:

Und werd' ich (durch den unerschaffnen Schein
Von seiner Herrlichkeit noch immer mehr gerühret)
Zu einer höheren Betrachtung aufgeführt....

Brockes repeatedly talks of feeling as going from his ear or eye into his soul or heart. We remember the lines from the poem "Kirschblüte bei der Nacht"--

...Es fiel mir ins Gesicht
Von einem hellen Stern ein weißes Licht,
Das mir recht in die Seele strahlte.

Similar ideas are expressed in the following passage:

Mich deucht, wenn ich, voll Freude,
Hier Hertz und Augen weide,
Und bey den Blumen steh;
Daß ich zu Dir mich schwinge,
Und dich, Quell aller Dinge,
Allgegenwärt'ger Schöpfer, seh.
(Der Garten, p. 89)

Also

Dieß Schau=Spiel der Natur ergetzet dergestalt
Mein Aug' und Hertz, daß ich so bald
So Aug' als Hertz zu meinem Schöpfer schwinge,
Und, Ihm zum Ruhm, den Herbst, und dessen Nutz,
besinge.
(Der Herbst, Metzler, p. 311)

¹Above, p.371. Also Metzler, p. 463.

Brockes talks about the senses perhaps more than any other subject. "Die fünf Sinne" is a long scientific poem of 158 stanzas. "Mancherley Vorwürfe der Sinnen" develops the theme of Addison's essay,¹ that God "In den fünf Sinnen, uns, zu so verschied'ner Lust,/Verschied'ne Thür= und Oeffnungen gegeben..." (p. 87). Not only do our senses give us pleasure but they are a means of serving God. It is our duty to use them to observe the beauty of God's creation. Conversely it is a sin not to use them:

Wird, durch die leidige Gewohnheit, jedermann
Dadurch in solchen Stand gesetzt, daß wir,
In aller creatur Glantz, Ordnung, Pracht und Zier,
Für GOTTes Wunder taub, für GOTTes Wercke blind,
Geschmack= Geruch= und Fühl=los sind:
Einfolglich ist sein Werck für uns vergebens.
(Der verstockte Chrysander, pp. 302-303)

Brockes prays to God "...daß ich Dir zur Ehre,/ Was hier so schön, zu hören, höre!/Auch, wenn ich rieche, fühl' und schmecke,/Daß ich in allem Dich entdecke!"² He prays for the ability to use the senses for the glory of God:

Herr! laß mich durch die Sinnen
Dein Loblied stets beginnen:
Gib, daß ich diesen Tag
Im Garten, Dir zu Ehre,
Geruch, Geschmack, Gehöre,
Gesicht und Hände brauchen mag!
(Morgenlied auf dem Garten, I, 175)

I have not found this theme expressed with so much emphasis in any other writer. Traherne writes: "My palat is a Touch-stone fit to taste how good Thou art";³ Christian Wolff tell us: "...man schmeckt auch zugleich den Verstand,

¹Spectator 387.

²VII, 159, Tübingen; Hamburg, p. 170.

³Above, p. 173.

die Weisheit, Macht und Güte Gottes...."¹ Du Bartas has a few lines on the same subject:

Dieu qui ne peut tomber és lourds sens des humains,
Se rend comme visible és oeuvres de ses mains:
Fait toucher à nos doigts, flairer à nos narines,
Gouster à nos palais ses vertus plus diuines:
Parle à nous à toute heure, ayant pour trughemens
Des pauillons astrez les reglez mouuemens.²

Fénelon also talks of "tasting God" in one of his prayers.³ His words make it clear that we do not perceive God through the senses:

Enfin, parce que vous êtes une vérité trop haute
et trop pure pour passer par les sens grossiers,
les hommes rendus semblables aux bêtes ne peuvent
vous concevoir...

(p. 146)

Addison's position on this question is not so definite. Man has sensations of God:

The devout man does not only believe but feels there
is a Deity. He has actual Sensations of him...

(Spectator 465)

Extracts from a letter which he printed in Spectator 571
echoes this thought:

In his deepest Solitude and Retirement, he [man] knows
that he is in company with the greatest of Beings; and
perceives within himself such real Sensations of his
Presence, as are more delightful than any thing that
can be met with in the Conversation of his Creatures.

But the same writer, like Fénelon, makes it clear that such
perception of God is more through the mind than through the
"gross" senses:

Our outward Senses are too gross to apprehend him;
we may however taste and see how gracious he is, by
his influence upon our Minds...

¹Above, p. 29.

²La Sepmaine, I, 129-134.

³Démonstration de l'existence de Dieu in Oeuvres spirituelles de François de Salignac de la Mothe Fénelon (Paris, 1822), vol. I. Addison greatly admired this prayer and translated it--Joseph Addison, The Evidences of the Christian Religion (Oxford, 1801), pp. 94-96.

To what extent Addison shares the correspondent's view is difficult to determine. Addison does not despise the senses, but praises God's gift of them as an enrichment of life.

Sensation for Brockes is not a thing of the mind but of the body, and all his efforts are concentrated on the total rehabilitation of the senses in the service of God. Yet, although many of his poems linger on the joys of the senses, there are many which deal with the spiritual aspect of approaching God by their means. The poem "Die, in göttlichen Wercken, in GOTT vergnügte Seele"¹ suggests that the spirit or mind has superior powers of perception:

Durchs Auge sieht mein Geist die Welt, und freut
sich ihrer Pracht und Zier;
Allein der Geist sieht weiter noch; Er siehet dich,
mein GOTT, in ihr.

The experience which Brockes subsequently describes is a spiritual one beyond that of the senses.

Several critics have attempted to discuss the question of "Naturgefühl." Paul van Tieghem, as we have seen, writes a whole book about the feeling for nature without defining it. An analysis of his premises and interpretations shows that what he means by "nature" is in fact idyllically idealized nature, and that the love of this tranquil, idealized nature is what he understands by his "sentiment de la nature." Such a study, however, only takes into consideration one aspect of the question and ignores the scientific, theological and sublime components of the eighteenth-century attitude to nature.

¹VII, 280-286, Tübingen.

Willi Flemming¹ realizes that the term "Naturgefühl" is complex; its components are: "Art des Naturgenusses, die Stellung des Menschen zur Natur, Deutung der Natur in Wissenschaft und Religion, Naturschönheit und Kunstschöpfung, Inhalt des Naturideals, Erscheinungsform der Natur und Auffassungsweise." Despite this, he still uses the word vaguely, and his book is full of general statements about it. In the seventeenth century, he tells us, "Naturgefühl" is often disguised in conventional language. In his section on the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries he finds "Naturgefühl":

Wir begegnen nur der freundlichen Landschaft des deutschen Mittelgebirges, mit Tal und Hügel, fließendem Brunnlein und Wassermühle, mit Wald und Wiesen voll Vogelgesang, voran Lerche und Nachtigall.
(p. 16)

This method of studying anything so subjective as the feeling for nature can never yield valuable results. Wolfgang Kayser's words warn us against it:

Für die Literaturgeschichte wurde noch aufschlußreicher die Tradition der amönen Landschaft. Eine fertige Landschaftsszenerie wird da durch die Jahrhunderte weitergereicht, zu der bestimmte Kulissen gehören: die Wiesen, das Bächlein, die sanften Lüfte, der Gesang der Vögel u.s.f. Ohne Kenntnis von der Tradition dieses Topos, der manchmal schon zum echten Motiv wird, besonders in der Lyrik des 17. Jahrhunderts, greifen alle Untersuchungen ins Leere, die aus solchen Szenen das Naturgefühl² des jeweiligen Dichters bestimmen wollen.

Imogen Kupffer,³ also dealing with "Naturgefühl," leaves the reader with an impression of vagueness. When it

¹Der Wandel des deutschen Naturgefühls vom 15. zum 18. Jahrhundert (Halle, 1931).

²Das sprachliche Kunstwerk (Bern, 1962), p. 75.

³Kupffer, pp. 127 f.

comes to Brockes' emotional reaction to nature, she is not sure about his feelings at all. This is much better than making assertions which cannot be substantiated. The related question of "Stimmung" is equally difficult. She asks whether "die stimmungshafte Naturlyrik" is the product of "stärkere Intensivierung der beschreibenden Poesie mit der stärkeren Betonung des Subjektiven" or of "eine entschiedene Absage an die beschreibende Dichtung" with a "Neuanfang mit veränderten Vorzeichen" and the emphasis on subjectivity (vom subjektiven aus), whatever all this might mean. She is wise enough not to attempt to answer a question composed of such undefined nebulous terms.

Imogen Kupffer does, however, produce a section on "Die Stimmungshafte Naturdichtung" which she says "lebt aus der engen Verbindung von Natur und Ich" (p. 127). She analyses the poem "Betrachtung des Mondscheins" and concludes that either Brockes was not attempting a "Stimmungsbild" or that he was not familiar with the laws of "Naturlyrik": "jedenfalls gelingt es ihm nicht, zu einer stimmungshaften lyrischen Gestaltung durchzustoßen. Er bleibt in Anklängen stecken" (p. 130). She is not absolutely sure what qualities are necessary for "Stimmung" to be achieved, but thinks that it has something to do with the omission of the "ich." "Die auf ein starkes Ungewitter erfolgte Stille" is an example of a poem with "Stimmung," and it has no "ich" and no didacticism until the final four lines. She writes: "Die Beobachtungen

runden sich zu geschlossenen Bildern und diese wiederum zu einem einheitlichen stimmungshaften Gesamteindruck" (p. 139). This is the storm poem which I discussed in connection with Virgil and the sublime. Against this background one could explain Brockes' success in this poem in a different way. He had a single source in mind instead of the usual medley, and he was swept forward by his interest in the sublime.

In an earlier chapter I already showed how unsatisfactory Janssen's ideas on "Stimmung" and "Naturgefühl" were. All these attempts to deal with the question end in vagueness, because of the subjective elements inherent in the question and because no attempt has been made to define the terms and restrict the field which they cover.

The words "Nature" and "Naturgefühl" are far too ambiguous to serve any useful purpose in a serious study. Where they have been applied to Brockes, more confusion has arisen than enlightenment. When Thomson tells us "Nature delights me in every form...", we have to be careful not to interpret these words from a post-romantic viewpoint. As his Preface to Winter makes clear, nature includes all of those elements which we have analysed in this study: God's creation and its "Contrivance, Beauty, and Order" lead us to the Creator.

Some writers talk as if there were no feeling for nature before the eighteenth century, but Thomson and Addison would not agree. Thomson writes: "It was this Devotion to the Works of Nature that, in his Georgicks,

inspired the rural Virgil to write so inimitably"; Addison quotes a letter from a friend who suggests that "the Love of Woods, of Fields and Flowers, of Rivers and Fountains, seems to be a Passion implanted in our Natures the most early of any, even before the fair Sex had a Being" (Spectator 393).

Do similar words have the same meaning at different periods? Euripides writes in Hippolytus:

Could I take me to some cavern for mine hiding,
In the hill-tops where the sun scarce hath trod;
Or a cloud make the home of mine abiding,
As a bird among the bird-droves of God!
Could I wing me to my rest amid the roar
Of the deep Adriatic on the shore,
Where the water of Eridanus is clear,
And Phaethon's sad sisters by his grave
Weep into the river, and each tear
Gleams, a drop of amber, in the wave.

To the strand of the Daughters of the Sunset,
The Apple-tree, the singing and the gold;
Where the mariner must stay him from his onset,
And the red wave is tranquil as of old;
Yea, beyond that Pillar of the End
That Atlas guardeth, would I wend;
Where a voice of living waters never ceaseth
In God's quiet garden by the sea,
And Earth, the ancient life-giver, increaseth
Joy among the meadows, like a tree.

Shelley writes:

Oh! lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!

Keats wishes to "fade away into the forest dim."

Lamartine seeks to escape beyond the limits of the earth:

Que ne puis-je, porté sur le char de l'Aurore,
Vague objet de mes vœux, m'élancer jusqu'à toi!

Are the feelings conveyed by these later writers comparable to those of Euripides? It is not possible to answer such a

¹The Hippolytus of Euripides, trans. Gilbert Murray (London, 1904), p. 39.

question. The application of the vague word "Naturgefühl" to Brockes is also problematic. Even if we attempt to narrow the idea down to the more limited field which Arthur Lovejoy's definition provides, other questions will arise and remain unanswered. "Naturgefühl," writes Lovejoy, is an "expression of emotions derived from the contemplation of the sensible world external to man, especially when this is conceived as a source of moral teaching or as a manifestation of, or means of contact with, some pervasive spiritual Presence."¹

What is meant by the contemplation of the external world? Is it necessary to have the scene before one's eyes? Would Wordsworth's practice of recollection in tranquillity come under this definition? What about poems by Brockes like "Die auf ein starckes Ungewitter erfolgte Stille," written without reference to a concrete situation? If we accept these, then another problem arises. How real is feeling which is not directly linked with the physical presence of the object of feeling? It could be argued that such feeling can be superior (Wordsworth, Keats).

Brockes' more interesting poems are the products of his imagination and of an imaginative use of literary sources. His poems of direct observation are often insipid. By "poems of direct observation" I mean those composed of unimaginative description, the kind of poetry for which he is famous, as in the following lines from "Ein Bett voll Hyacinthen":

¹Essays in the History of Ideas (New York, 1960), p. 75.

Ich ward recht eigentlich gewahr,
Wie an jeder Blume Fuß sechs grüne Ecken
Sich rings, so um als von dem Stengel strecken,
Und einen grünen Stern formieren,
Wodurch sie das sonst nackte Land
Mit einem eignen Bilde zieren.

(II, 26)

The rest of this poem is more poetic. There are a few poems which consist almost entirely of direct observation of this kind. The long poem "Das Thürmchen zu Ritzebüttel" (VII, 289-306, Tübingen; Hamburg, pp. 310 ff.) describes the view from each window of the house in the manner of the following passage:

Das erste Fenster

Der ersten Tafel, lincker Hand, bestrahlter Vorgrund
ist der Wall,
Der mit dem Werckzeug der Bellonen, mit Stücken, die
zu Freudenschüssen,
Und fremde Schiffe, welche grüssen, hinwieder
knallend zu begrüßen,
Gott Lob! bisher gebraucht worden, wohl ausstaffirt,
und überall
Das Amt-Hause rings umher umgibt. Ein zierlich rothes
Schilder-Haus
Steht mitten zwischen zwo Canonen. Die Brustwehr macht
die Grentzen aus,
Und lasset uns, wo sie sich endet, der sogenannten
Kälber-Weide,
Nachdem dieselbe aufgebrochen, das lieblich wallende
Getrayde
In einem bald smaragdnen Schmuck, und bald im güldnen
Glantze, sehn.

As we have already noted, Brockes records emotional reactions to certain experiences of the external world. The classical type of ideal landscape produces "Lust und Ergetzen"; wilder sublime scenes and the experience of space stir the imagination and produce mixed feelings of pleasure and fear. He also indulges in the semi-mystical experience of losing himself.

The external world, whether it is directly observed or recollected, is a source of moral teaching for Brockes. It proclaims the beauty of the creation and the lesson that it has to be enjoyed for the glory of God. It manifests the God of the scientific background and also the all-pervading God of Platonism.

Having interpreted Brockes' poetic activity in terms of Lovejoy's definition of "Naturgefühl," we still have a problem to face. If Brockes is constructing poems out of foreign sources and by an imaginative manipulation of motifs, how far does he himself really feel what he describes? It is of course possible on occasions to use foreign material with such conviction that it becomes fully assimilated. The question is again an unanswerable one, as there is no foolproof yard-stick for measuring feeling. Intuition is too subjective. Perhaps three further examples of poems published by Brockes might throw some light on outstanding questions.

- Wenn iemand irgendwo in einer Höhle,
Allwo desselben Sinn und Seele
Von aller Creatur und allem Vorwurf leer,
In steter Dämmerung erzogen wär;
5 Und trät' auf einmahl in die Welt,
Zumahl zur holden Frühlings=Zeit,
Und sähe dann der Sonnen Herrlichkeit,
Und sah' ein grün beblühtes Feld,
Und sähe dick bebüschte Hügel,
10 Und sähe reiner Bäche Spiegel,
Durch einen Schatten=reichen Wald,
Mit seiner sich drin spiegelnden Gestalt,
Umkräntzt mit glatten Binsen, fliessen,
Und sähe Flüsse sich ergiessen,
15 Auch ihrer Bürger schuppicht Heer;
Und sah' ein unumschränktes Meer,
Und sähe bunte Gärten prangen,
Auch, wann die Sonn' erst untergangen,
Der Abend=Röthe güldne Pracht;

- 20 Und sah' in einer heitern Nacht
Den Wunder=schönen Sternen=Himmel;
Zusammt den Silber=reinen Glantz
Der Schatten=Sonne, wenn sie gantz
Und hört' ein zwitscherndes Getümmel
25 Der Singe=Vögel, und den Schall
Der angenehmen Nachtigall,
In Lust= und Schatten=reichen Büschen,
Sich mit dem sanften Rauschen mischen,
Und hört', auf rauh=und glatten Kieseln,
30 Geschwinde Bäche murmelnd rieseln;
Und schmeckte tausend süsse Früchte,
Und schmeckte vielerley Gerichte,
Die Wasser, Luft und Erde geben;
Und schmeckte, voller Geist und Kraft,
35 Den säurlich=süssen Tranck und Saft
Der lieblichen Tockayer=Reben;
Und röche Blumen mancher Arten,
In Feldern, Wäldern und im Garten;
Und röch' auf Bergen und im Thal
40 Gesunde Kräuter ohne Zahl;
Und röche balsamirte Däfte;
Und fühlte sanfte laue Lüfte,
Und fühlte Wunder=süsse Triebe
Von einer zugelaßnen Liebe;
45 Und fühlte mit vergnügter Brust,
Des süssen Schlafes sanfte Lust;
Und fühlte, wann der Schlaf vorbey,
Daß er dadurch gestärcket sey,
Um alles, was so Wunder=schön,
50 Aufs neue wiederum zu sehn.
Auf welche sonderbare Weise
Würd' er sich nicht darob ergetzen!
Würd' er sich nicht halb selig schätzen?
Er bliebe gantz gewiß dabey,
55 Daß er, aufs mindst' im Paradeise,
Wo nicht schon gar im Himmel sey.
Und wir, die alle diese Gaben
Unstreitig üm und an uns haben,
Empfindens minder, als ein Stein;
60 Ja machen uns, an deren Stelle,
Das Paradeis fast selbst zur Hölle.
Was mag daran wohl Ursach seyn?
(Metzler, pp. 1-3)

This poem provides a good example of the way in which it could be possible for Brockes to construct a poem out of existing motifs. The Aristotelian idea of a man who has lived underground and suddenly sees the beauty

of the earth is basic.¹ Brockes makes a sentence of fifty lines out of this hypothesis, but the conditional construction is only completed in line 56. This structure is found in English poetry of the period.² Brockes expands the original material by introducing two of his favourite motifs--the beauty of spring and the revelation of the beauty of the world through the senses. The stereotyped picture of spring with the flowery meadows, murmuring streams, birds and nightingale is divided according to the relevant sense. The meadows are in the section of what he would see ("er sähe") and the streams and birds under the sense of sound ("er hörte"). Each section is in turn expanded by additional sensuous experiences--forest, gardens, sea, sunset, stars, the taste of food and wine, the scent of flowers, and the sensation of "laue Lüfte" and "Wunder=süsse Triebe." From line 51 until the end the style deteriorates with the usual didacticism--earth is paradise, but foolish man transforms it into hell.

As I have already mentioned, there are poems in the Irdisches Vergnügen which I feel Brockes could not have written independently. One of these is the poem which he took from Shaftesbury without acknowledgement. Such poems belong to the same background and have the same motifs, but the style is more concise than Brockes' own style. One of these is "Vergnügliche und andächtige Betrachtung."

¹Above, p. 427.

²William Collins, "Ode to Evening" Anne, Duchess of Winchelsea, "Nocturnal Reverie."

des Schöpfers in seinen Werken." It is printed as if it had been written by Brockes himself, but if we compare it to another poem in volume VIII which is a translation, we find that it is an adaptation. Unfortunately we are not given the author's name and I have been unable to trace it. It is in the style of Shaftesbury and Thomson. Some of the motifs from Shaftesbury's hymnic apostrophe to nature are in it. The words "Bear with my adventurous and bold approach" resemble lines 13-14 of the translated poem. The motif of retirement and the last line are also found in Shaftesbury. Brockes translated the line from the Shaftesbury passage as--"In Deiner Unermeßlichkeit vergehen aller Welt Gedanken,/Versenken und verlieren sich...."

Die Herrlichkeit des Schöpfers in den Geschöpfen
(Uebersetzt)

Ihr einsamen bebüschten Hügel,
ihr müßt mir euren Schatten leihen,
Um, in demselben, unserm Schöpfer, den Ausbruch meiner Lust zu weihen.
Die Stadt, der Sitz der Leiden-schaften, wodurch sie unsern Geist bethört,
Hat lange die Betrachtungen mir unterbrochen und gestört.
Ihr Wälder, ihr allein vermögt, sie zu erzeugen und zu nähren;
So würdigt unsern großen Meister, Ihn zu erheben, zu verehren.
Er spricht mit mir in jedem Wesen, ich seh Ihn in der Luft, Er glänzt Im Firmament, auf unsrer Erd', auch in dem Meer, das sie begränzt;

Es prägt die reizende Natur,
ohn allen Makel,
schön und rein,

Vergnügliche und andächtige Betrachtung des Schöpfers in seinen Werken.

Ihr entlegnen holden Büsche,
leiht mir eure stille Schatten,
Um in ihnen meine Pflicht unserm Schöpfer abzustatten.
Gar zu lang hat Stadt und Hof, der Affecten Sitz und Heerd,
Meiner Sinnen Krafft verwirrt, die Betrachtungen gestört.
Ihr, ihr Wälder, unterhaltet, zeugt und bringet sie herfür!
Ehret denn gemeinschaftlich, preiset unsern Herrn mit mir.
Er bezeugt sich mir in allen: In der Luft erblick ich Ihn;
Ihn zeigt uns des weiten Meers und der Erden schönes Grün.
Ja Er glänzt nicht weniger in des Himmels blauen Schein.

Sich den darob erstaunten Augen,
bey mir, an allen Orten ein;

Es pranget Gott an allen Enden,
mit Ehr und Herrlichkeit gekrönt;

Sein unermeßlich Wesen reicht,
so weit der Himmel Kreis sich dehnet.

Vergieb, o großer Schöpfer!
denn der Neubegier Verwegenheit,

Wenn da ich, ämsig zu erforschen der Wunder
Mannigfaltigkeit,

Mich, bald die Ebnen, bald die Wälder, in ihnen,
hin und wieder gehn,

Und bald von Dir, bald meiner Liebe, mich wechselsweise sprechen sehn.

Ich komme nicht in dieser Wälder so Laub= als Schatten=reiche Büsche,

Der Vögel Lieder anzuhören, noch ihr hell=klingendes Gezische;

Ich komme bloß allein, o GOTT!
um Deiner Stimme Lieblichkeit

Zu hören, welche der Natur Gesetze giebt, und Maaß und Zeit.

Ich fühl ein inniges Vergnügen, allein bey kühl= und stillen Bächen,

In einem feurigen Gebeth,
mit Dir, O GOTT! mich zu besprechen.

Dem bewunderten Gesicht zeigt im Glanz, der allgemein,

Die uns rührende Natur ohne Flecken sich und rein.

Die grosse Gottheit triumphirt, mit sel'ger Herrlichkeit bekränzt,

In jedem Ort, in allem Raum, ohn End' und Schranken, überall.

Denn es wird sein unendlichs Wesen, es wird sein unermeßlichs All,

Von aller Himmel Himmel Höh' nicht eingeschränket, nicht begrenzt.

Vergib mir denn, o HErr! mein kühn= und lehrbegieriges Unterfangen,

Wenn ich bemühet bin zu dir, durch deine Werke zu gelangen.

Es sehen mich die Büsch' und Wälder in ihnen öfters wechselweise,

Von deiner Liebe mich besprechen, und auch von deines Namens Preise.

Ich komme darum nicht so oft in diesen Blätter=reichen Büschen,

Der Vögel süßen Schall zu hören, ihr Gurgeln und ihr klingend Zischen;

Ich komme darum hier, o Gott! damit von mir sey ungestört,

In ihrer stillen Einsamkeit, dein all=erhaltend Wort gehört,

Das die geschäftige Natur Gesetz und Ordnung halten lehrt.

Ich hör in dick=verwachsenen Gründen, durch mein von Lust geschärftes Lauschen,

Ein über Kiesel rieselnd Bächlein, dir seinem HErrn, ein Lob=Lied rauschen,

Mit welchem ich, von Andacht heiß, gedrängt von innigem Vergnügen,

Im sanften Rauschen meiner Seufzer mein Lob=Lied mich bemü' zu fügen.

Da rühm ich Deine Weisheit,
Macht und Lieb in hel-
len heiligen Liedern,

Und höre die gefällig' Echo,
im Wiederhall, den
Klang erwiedern.

Von Balsam=Duft, den uns die
Ros' aus ihren offenen
Blättern schickt,
Sind meine Sinnen fast bezau-
bert, und wird die
Seele selbst erquickt,

Es wendet meine Augen auf-
wärts, zu Dir, der
Düfte süße Schwall.

Für eine Seele, die Dich
sucht, bist Du, o
Schöpfer überall.

Wer rühmt nicht, preiset und
bewundert der hellen
Sterne funkelnd Licht,
Das durch die Finsterniß der
Nacht, und ihren dun-
klen Schleyer, bricht;
Zusammt der Morgen=Röthe
Schimmer, der alle
Sterblichen belehrt,

Ich spühre, mit erfreutem,
Blick, ich sehe, mit
gerührter Seelen,
Mit grünen und mit kühlen
Schatten der Sonnen
Strahlen sich ver-
mählen,
Laub, Blumen, Gras und Kraut
verschönern, wodurch
dein Werk, die schöne
Welt,
Den fast darob erstaunten Au-
gen noch einst so schön
wird vorgestellt,
Die, als bey einem hellen Licht,
Macht, Lieb' und Weis-
heit, die dir eigen,
Und kurz: selbst deine Gegen-
wart den Geistern, die
drauf achten, zeigen.
So dann erklingt mein Lob=
Gesang, und der ge-
schäft'ge Widerhall
Verdoppelt meine reine Töne
und stärket meinen
Lieder Schall.
Bald suchen die ambrirte Düfte
von eben aufgebrochnen
Rosen,
In dem bezaubernden Geruch,
der seele selber
liebzukosen;
Des holden Rauchwerks süsser
Schwall erhebt so wohl
mein Aug' als Herz,
Und führet sie in sanftem Zug
mit sich, zu dir, und
Himmel=werts.
Was sind nicht in den schnellen
Vögeln, in Fischen,
wild=und zahmen Thieren
Für Wunder=Proben einer Lieb
und einer weisen Macht
zu spüren!
Für einen Geist, der sich mit
dir, in deinem Werk,
sucht zu verbinden,
Ist dein allgegenwärtigs Wesen,
o Schöpfer! überall
zu finden.
Wen aber rührt insonderheit,
wenn Schatten unsre
Welt verdunkeln,
In dem beflamten Sternen=Heer
nicht dein glorwürdiges
göttlichs Funkeln?
Wem zeigt der bepurperten und
glänzenden Auroren
Licht,

Durch ihr gefärbtes feurigs
Glänzen, daß Tag und
Sonne wiederkehrt?
Und endlich, wer erstaunet
nicht, wenn er das
helle Mond=Licht sieht,
Zusammt der Sonne Wunder=
Feuer, wenn es am
hellen Mittag glüht?
Inzwischen ist doch aller
Glanz, und aller ihrer
Schönheit Pracht,
Bey meines Gottes eignem Licht,
nur Schatten, Finster-
niß und Nacht.
„Unendlich= groß= und mächtger
Schöpfer! die Pracht
und Schönheit Deiner
Werke,
„Die zeigen Deine Herrlichkeit,
und machen, daß ich
Dich bemerke.
„Was für verschiedene Bewegung
erregt der Anblick
aller Zier,
„Worinn so Erd als Himmel
glänzen, durch ihre
Schönheit, nicht in
mir!
„Welch Ordnung, Lieblichkeit,
o GOTT! welch Anmuth,
Harmonie und Pracht,
„Wird mir, in Deinen Wunder=
Werken, und doch zum
Theil nur, kund ge-
macht!
„Wer reicht denn selbst an
Deines Wesens, und
Majestät Vollkommen-
heit?
„O HERR! der Mensch verlieret
sich in Deine Uner-
meßlichkeit.

(VIII, 206 ff.)

Geschmückt mit lauter Himmels=
Farben, auch früh, dein
göttlichs Daseyn nicht?
Wen rührt nicht des Mondes
Schimmer? Vom Glantz,
der aus der Sonne quillet,
Wird nicht nur Himmel, Erd und
Meer, auch billig Seel'
und Geist erfüllet,
Und dennoch sind derselben
Strahlen und aller
Sonnen Licht und Pracht,
Nur dunckle Schatten bey der
Gottheit, nur Nacht bey
dem, der sie gemacht.
Allein, Anbetungs=würd'ger
Schöpfer! wir können
bloß in deinen Werken,
Die eigentlichen Eigenschaften
von deinem wahren Wesen
merken.
Ach, was erregen nicht in mir
so mannigfaltige
Bewegung,
So viele Wunder auf der Welt,
Schmuck, Ordnung,
Schönheit, Pracht für
Regung!
Welch eine Harmonie, o GOTT!
zeigt überall uns
die Natur,
Und doch sieht man von deinen
Wercken den kleinsten
Theil in ihnen nur.
Wer taugt denn deiner Majestät
selbstständ'gem Wesen
nachzuspühren?
In deiner Unermeßlichkeit
muß Mensch und Engel
sich verlieren.

(VII, 392-396, Tübingen)

The second poem is obviously based on the one which Brockes tells us is a translation, and is therefore not his own work. Brockes keeps the same ideas, but varies the wording. He also adds a few ideas; the second poem is fifteen lines longer. We can therefore say that another of his writing methods is to adapt other people's work in this way.

Brockes also seems to use motifs and vary them in his poetry. The retirement motif from these poems (lines 1-4) is a good example. It is found in several poems¹ in different combinations as in the following phrases--"von Stadt und Hof entfernt," "dem städtischen Geräusch entzogen," "entfernt vom städtischen Getümmel," "fern vom städtischen Getümmel," and "von Welt=Geräusch entfernet." Brockes could have found it in the above poem or in Shaftesbury's "refuge from the toilsome world of business," but it is a commonplace and therefore hard to pin down. It occurs so frequently from volume VI that one can assume that it has been assimilated into Brockes' own way of thinking. This seems also to be true of Brockes' circle of friends. Zinck's preface to volume VII of the Irdisches Vergnügen (3. April 1743) tells us that this volume was the fruit of those hours which Brockes spent "entfernet von dem Geräusche der Stadt, in Ruhe und Zufriedenheit auf dem Lande...." He praises life in the country and its peace which is lacking "in der Stadt und unter dem Gewühl der Menschen...."

¹Metzler, p. 163; VI, 53; "Schluß zum Frühling," VII, 181, Tübingen; "Gute Gedanken auf dem Lande," VIII, 89-90, Tübingen; "Frühlingsgedanken," VIII, 47-48, Tübingen; "Das Thürmchen zu Ritzebüttel," VII, 289, Tübingen.

Of all the material which has been collected in the course of this study some kind of interpretation, no matter how hypothetical, has to be made to account for all the contradictions noted in this chapter. When Brockes attempts to write poetry without a source in mind about his everyday life or other trivial matters, his style is usually prosaic and extremely bad. Subjects which interest him enable him to rise above this. Brockes, sitting in his garden describing accurately what is in front of him, is unproductive. It is his imagination which must enrich his observation and his observation alone is inadequate. It, in turn, must be enriched by his reading. William F. Mainland and Harry W. Pfund--the idea is also suggested vaguely by Janssen--condemn Brockes' "over-zealous attempt to communicate sensory data."¹ This is offered as a partial explanation of the problem of Brockes' uneven production, the problem which concerns us in this chapter. It seems to me however that it is precisely this attempt which has enabled Brockes to jump from the seventeenth century into the future. Professor Mainland is merely pointing to the attempts which failed, rather than to the many successes. The failures merely confirm Brockes' lack of refined sensitivity. I have shown that his interest in scientific observation and discovery enabled Brockes to develop vocabulary and motifs which aided his perception, making him more sensitive to colours and shapes around him. After this, it is his "over-zealous attempt to communicate

¹William F. Mainland, "Brockes and the limitations of imitation," in Reality and Creative Vision in German Lyrical Poetry, ed. A. Closs (London, 1963), p. 109.

sensory data" which takes him beyond objective description, even if he does overstep the mark at times. In order to do this, he describes one thing in terms of another and moves from one realm to another. His entire creative process may be largely a conscious manipulation of such motifs and of others which he has picked up from other writers, a process which is not unlike the development of concetti in the previous century. The point to bear in mind is that this constituted a step in the right direction and that much of his poetic activity, whether he was aware of it or not, was in complete harmony with the literary scene as illustrated by the theories of Addison and Thomson on the imagination and on the sublime. It points the way into the future. This is why some critics have found in some of his poetry the kind of "Naturgefühl" which belongs to the later period. This seems too dangerous a conclusion. Firstly, the conception of nature in Brockes' day was completely different, and I hope that my analysis and reconstitution of the literary and intellectual setting has made this clear. Secondly, Brockes seems to me to write poetry as a kind of conscious game. He is an eclectic, a collector of literary phrases and miscellaneous commonplaces which he changes around to form different poems, as one forms different pictures with a kaleidoscope. Some of the results are very successful, others are not. This accounts for the inequality of his work and for the lack of a uniform style. If a subject interests him particularly, the material is welded together more harmoniously and can

even form a pleasing unit. Another factor which determines the unity of a poem is the source. "Die Berge" has no unity because Brockes is using different sources which clash. The storm poem is more successful because he has one picture in mind, probably Virgil's storm. This whole method of production is assisted by Brockes' linguistic talents.¹ Many of his poems, especially those inspired by sublime subjects, are particularly rich linguistically.

If I am right about Brockes' methods of composition then the question of "Naturgefühl" is really irrelevant. If the creative process is not co-ordinated with the emotional experience, it is impossible to be certain how far Brockes felt what he expressed, especially when he uses such hyperbolical phrases as "ich verliere mich" and "ich verschwinde."

In any case, whether Brockes was fully aware of it or not, he was transmitting, by means of his poems and translations, some of the most important ideas of the eighteenth century. For this alone he deserves recognition. How these ideas were further exploited and to what extent the greater writers who followed him were indebted to his work for these ideas are subjects for further research.

¹ Brockes knew many languages and sometimes put his linguistic ability into the service of poetry as in the poem "Die auf ein starckes Ungewitter erfolgte Stille." As the footnote tells us (I, 149), he deliberately avoided the consonant "r" at the beginning of the poem, but introduced it as the storm approached.

CONCLUSION

The accounts given of Brockes in existing histories of German literature are so misleading that they need to be completely revised. They disseminate factual errors based on out-of-date, unscholarly essays and present a distorted picture of the poet. Unfounded judgments which are repeated from book to book are hard to eradicate and even influence the vision of present-day scholars who see in Brockes' poems the depiction of objective reality and ignore his imaginative gifts.

Some of the longer studies of Brockes have taken the form of a paraphrased summary of the Irdisches Vergnügen with no attempt at analysis. Other attempts to delve deeper, while making some good points, have produced dubious conclusions, since they work with subjective criteria such as the feeling for nature (Naturgefühl). The widespread misunderstanding of Brockes is due to ignorance of his sources and background. The scientific poems are dismissed as dull, uninspired and even ludicrous, whereas they contain the key to the understanding of the whole of the Irdisches Vergnügen.

Before one studies any aspect of Brockes' work it is surely important to examine the background of the age. The first volumes of the Irdisches Vergnügen were very successful and ran through several editions. Although the subsequent decline in the number of editions indicates a certain decline of interest in Brockes' poetry, it is not altogether fair to dismiss him as "ein vergessener Dichter" of no significance. Because later poets received his work less favourably and Lessing attacked descriptive poetry, Brockes' achievement should not be underestimated. It is the scholar's

task to explain the initial enthusiasm even though he himself may find the poems boring. Brockes' work is full of anticipations of the more famous writers who came after him; his motifs and ideas persist. The impact which he must have made at the time should not be overlooked. Even his translations (Marino and Thomson especially) must have furthered the linguistic development of German in this formative period.

Arndt and Sriver are repeatedly given as Brockes' sources. In fact, their work contains only a small proportion of the vast material which we find in the Ird. Verg... Fénelon's Démonstration de l'existence de Dieu (translated into German in 1714) and Derham's Astro-theology (translated into German in 1728 by Johann Albert Fabricius and dedicated to Brockes), on the other hand, contain identical ideas and are similar in spirit. These works themselves resemble many other works which in turn draw their material from the Royal Society and similar learned bodies. Brockes shares with all these writers the same conception of God and the same aims of studying the external world for the glory of God.

Brockes has been regarded as an isolated figure, a purely German phenomenon. His work actually belongs to a long literary tradition which includes biblical epics, the works of the Church Fathers especially their hexaemera, and goes back to the Psalms and Genesis. The writings of the Stoics and of Virgil and Lucretius are also important for this development. The subjects of Brockes' poems and his motifs are all to be found in these writers.

There is in the Ird. Verg. another conception of God in association with another group of ideas which are not found in this literary tradition, but in the work of the Cambridge Platonists and those who were influenced by them. Although there is no conclusive evidence so far that Brockes had read their works, he had access to many of their ideas through Shaftesbury. But the fact that he used several of their motifs, some of which were new to German poetry, suggests direct or indirect influence. Those of Brockes' critics who have noticed these ideas have tended to call them mystical or pantheistic, but our study reveals their Platonic origin.

In the autobiographical poems more mundane ideas are found, together with the conception of a God whose main concern is looking after Brockes and his family. These seem to spring from Brockes' more material existence. Writers on Brockes have found it difficult to characterize his religious attitude, but an understanding of the context lightens the task. Brockes' God varies according to the subject of the particular poem and the subject itself originates in a special context. This seems to suggest that Brockes merely takes over foreign material without too much concern about assimilating it, although such a suggestion cannot be conclusively verified. In some poems there is even a mixture of the different conceptions of God, usually in hymnic passages which, by their nature, require the invocation of as many names and attributes of God as possible.

Brockes and the tradition with which I have identified him are particularly interested in the hymn, especially since their writing is religious in inspiration. Brockes once again collects the main elements of a hymnic style together, either

in passages within his poetry or in separate hymns. He is therefore significant as a forerunner of hymnic poetry.

Recent studies in English literature have widened the scope of the sublime as a literary category and as one of the most important elements in the subsequent "romantic revolution." No one has noticed that Brockes is a poet of the sublime "par excellence" since his poetry treats all aspects of it to an unprecedented degree. Characteristically, his imagination is overwhelmed by the experience of the vast and incomprehensible in nature and is raised to God. The "ghastly and hideous" have "their peculiar beauties" and produce in us mixed feelings of fear and fascination associated with divinity. Brockes goes further than English exponents of the sublime and writes about the sea, forests, fire, the firmament, the vast sea-bed and towering mountains. But he goes beyond objective reality to appeal to an intenser kind of imaginative reality. He also adapts Burnet's apocalyptic account of mountains, sea and final conflagration to the sublime. Brockes' attitude to mountains has baffled several critics, but once we have identified the sources, the problem vanishes.

It is difficult to associate the prosaic Brockes who is reflected in his diary and autobiographical poems with this kind of artistic achievement and with many imaginative descriptive poems of considerable merit. Perhaps it is this glaring contrast which has blinded critics so that they fail to see the value of these poems. The contradiction is indeed hard to explain. Several hypotheses may be offered. Brockes versified almost all the important ideas of the time and can be considered as a catalyst merely. The fact that he introduced

banalities as well as significant ideas into his poetry would support this view. An alternative suggestion is that there lurked beneath that superficial personality an intensity of imagination which soared beyond his usual limitations when kindled; the sublime appealed to his imagination.

Brockes' descriptive poetry is said to have been inspired by Pope's idylls, but there is no evidence to support this view. There are some pseudo-pastorals in Brockes; they are quite unlike those of Pope, but have more in common with the great classical tradition, especially with Virgil's Georgics since they contain the motifs of beatus ille, locus amoenus, "bucolic repose" and others. It is also fallacious to repeat that Brockes was influenced by Thomson's Seasons since his first volume of the Ird. Verg. (1721) already contains most of the motifs of Thomson's work (published in 1726). Brockes and Thomson were drawing on the same sources.

Since Brockes' more successful poems of natural description (imaginative description not soulless objective description) seem to be quite unique for that period and independent of sources, the question of their genesis arises. It has not been realized that Brockes' development of descriptive motifs originates in his scientific interests. Most of the theories on which it is based are already versified in his scientific poems. Botanical accounts of plant "anatomy," circulation of sap, and plant classification find their way into Brockes' descriptive poetry and are often assimilated into the language of poetry. Newton's theories of light and Locke's ideas on sense perception help Brockes to evolve a new language of description and to render the variations of

light and shade. The way in which he responds to the external world is expressed in these terms. What has been criticized as exaggerated description forsaking reality can be interpreted as Addison's aesthetics of the imagination put into practice. In his most successful attempts Brockes departs from reality only to give us a heightened form of reality.

The neglect of sources and background has led to short-sighted interpretations. Brockes' "Philisterseele", critics have argued, is incompatible with good poetry, therefore the Irdisches Vergnügen is inferior. Even the good poems are found to be defective. Critics who concentrate on the work itself without reference to the poet's personality fall into another trap and construct an elaborate philosophy and artistic achievement worthy of a Goethe. Brockes' work is such a mixture of heterogeneous material that one can prove almost anything by picking out suitable evidence and closing one's eyes to the rest. Any interpretation of Brockes' Irdisches Vergnügen must take into account the paradox of the "Philisterseele" who, besides writing much rubbish, produces a few masterpieces. It must also explain the patchwork of styles and ideas, the prosaic and the truly poetic.

Only when one studies Brockes' sources and the way in which they are used does a possible explanation suggest itself. There is no need to search Brockes' soul in order to understand "Die Berge." As for the other poems in this group, Brockes is simply giving us as much information as he can about the subject from what he has read or heard. By identifying the origin of these ideas we can see how he has

treated them. From his imagination and his theories of sense perception we note the development of set ways of seeing and describing blossoms, trees, stars, and rays of light and how they are repeated in different configurations from poem to poem. We see also how he sometimes made different versions of material which he translated and adapted. From all these possible sources Brockes gathered material which he arranged and rearranged in his poems as one produces pictures with a kaleidoscope. The thoughts and ideas change accordingly, so that it is unjustifiable to regard the poems as the expression of a deep inner experience, or to maintain that the religious ideas evolve from protestantism to a mild form of pantheism.

Abermalige Betrachtung des Frühlings....¹

Nach Anleitung einiger Gedancken aus Mr. Thomson Seasons

Abermalige

Betrachtung des Frühlings /

ins besondere

der darinn überall verspührten

Fruchtbarkeit und Triebe zur Vermehrung.

Nach Anleitung einiger Gedancken
aus

Mr. Thomson Seasons.

Mein Herr, loß jetzt zur Frühlings-Zeit in dir ein
Freuden-Feur entglimmen!
Beschau zu des Schöpfers Preise, die, von Ihm
Selbst, geschmückte Welt!
Bemühe dich, zu Dessen Ruhm, Der alles schafft
und erhält,

In einer fleißigen Betrachtung, ein frohes Dank-
lied anzustimmen.

*

Das allgemeine Kleid der lächelnden Natur,
Das holde Grün, bedeckt die jungst noch welcke Flur,
Mit Blumen überall durchwirct und gestickt.
Es ist, so weit man sieht, das flache Feld geschmückt.
Bergleich bemühen ist die saftigen Wälder sich,
Vom Sonnen-Strahl belebt, gemeinschaftlich,
Der stündlich schwellender gefüllter Knospen Menge,
Durch ein sich mehrendes fast sichtbares Gedränge,
Und

Frühlings-Gedicht.

Und immer stärkern Trieb zu öfnen, sich zu spalten,
Und ihr verschränktes Laub allmählich zu entfalten,
Bis die vereinte Zweig' sich durch einander strecken,
Und den begrünten Grund mit jungen Schatten des

öfen,

Worinn das frohe Wild auf weichem Grafe

Mit raschendem Geräusch, durch die verworrene

Durch junges Farren - Kraut und dichte Büsche

dringt,

Worinn sie sich bald zeigen, bald verstecken.

Unzweifeln, daß fast überall,

Uns neue Freude zu erwecken,

Mit einem zwischendenden Gepeif und hellem Schall,

Die neue rege Schaar der bunten Vögel singt.

Da denn der reine Ton der hellen Nachtigall

So gar, den lange nicht gehörten Wiederhall

Durch ihren starken Schlag, zur süßen Antwort

zwingt.

Der bunte Garten glüht, und füllt die laue Luft

Mit einem angewürzt- und Balsam-reichen Duft,

Als wie ein Rauchfaß an. Jetzt muß man sich

bemühen,

Dem ungesunden Dampf der Stadt sich zu entziehen,

Und dem mühsel'gen Lärm des Hofes zu entfliehen;

Um, wie das ist, durch Oottes Wunder-Hand,

So lieblich ausgeschmückte Land,

So angenehm, so wunderschön,

In stiller Namuth anzusehn.

Wir wollen ist in Feldern, Wäldern, Auen,

Des Schöpfers weise Liebe schauen!

7. Theil.

C

Komm,

Komm, laß uns die durch Ort so schön gezeigte Welt,

Woselbst Er seine Huld recht sichtbar dargestellt,

Doch unsers Ansehns würdig achten,

Und das, zu untrer Lust, gleichmüthig Jahr betrachten!

Komm, laß uns früh am bunten Schmuck der feuchten

Wiesen uns vergnügen,

Vor auf des Schaues klare Tropfen, wie lauter reine

Perlen, liegen!

Dann wollen wir uns hie und da in kleinen, erst belaub-

ten, Büschen,

Die wie ein holder Labyrinth das Feld erfüllen, uns

erfrischen.

Auch laß uns, nebst der grünen Pracht der Klee- und

Kräuter-reichen Auen,

Der Gärten tausendfarbigen und tausendförmigen

Schmuck beschauen.

Gieh dorten einen weissen Strich von Birn- und

Kirschenbäumen blühn!

Hier einen Grenken-losen Platz in holdem Purpur

feurig glühn!

Und dort, um unsern regen Blick um desso mehr noch

zu erfrischen,

Auf jenem schönen Apfelbaum sich alle beyde Farben

mischen,

So, daß ein nimmer müdes Zug, in jedem Gegen-

wurf vergnügt,

Sich wechselt, weiß in beyden Farben, von einer Lust

zur andern fügt.

Noch ziehen ungezählte Wunder, durch ihre

Pracht und Schönheit, dort,

Wrein ernstes Denken mit sich fort;

Das

Das aber ihren Schmuck verstellt: denn, wer kan

jemals der Natur,

In ihren Mahleryen gleichen?

Kan unser Sinn die holde Schöpfung und schöne

Farben wohl erreichen?

Kan jemand wohl die zarte Spur

Der unbegreiflichen Erfindung und die verborgnen

Künste finden?

Kan wohl ein Mensch die Art der Handlung und ihre

Wirckungen ergründen?

Weiß jemand wohl so anzulegen, wie sie, in unge-

spürter Kleinheit?

Weiß jemand etwas zu vermengen in solcher dünn- und

zarten Feinheit,

Wie wir in Knospen, welche blühn, und woraus end-

lich Frucht' entsiehn,

Ja, in der Pflangen grossen Menge fast stets auf an-

dre Weise sehn?

Da die Gedanken nun nicht fähig so fremder Arbeit

nachzuspüren,

Wie kan es doch die Sprache thun? Wo nimmt

man immer Worte her?

Gefärbt mit solchen schönen Farben? Und welcher

Kraft fiel es nicht schwer,

Mit solchem süß- und holdem Del, den zarten Bau

zu balsamiren;

Mit solchem angewürkten Duft, der unerschöpflich sie

umringt,

Und nach dem Leben vorzustellen den Balsam, der aus

ihnen dringt!

Wir wollen iß denn aus dem Reich der stillen Pflans-

ken uns erheben,

C 2

Um

Um auf das angenehme Wesen des bunten Lustvolks
acht zu geben.

Hör' und bemerke, wie so laut der Laub- und Vo-
gel-reiche Wald

Durch seiner Kleinen Bürger Rehlen, dich zu sich ein-
zuladen, schallt;

Nach, leicht mit euren süßen Ton, ihr Nachtigallen, daß
mein Singen,

Durch eure Melodey beseelt, mag lieblicher und besser
fliegen.

Sich fühl' ein reizendes Verlangen, und, um auch ein-
der Wälder Liebe

In holden Vögeln zu besingen, noch nimmer sonst
verspürte Triebe.

So bald in der erwärmten Luft der Geist der Liebe
sich verbreitet,

Und tönend in ihr Herze dringt, fängt gleich der Vo-
gel muntre Schaar,

Auf ihren Flug bedacht, die Federn zurecht zu bringen,
ziehet, spreitet

Die bunten Flügel aus. Ihr Lied, das mehrentheils
vergessen war,

Stimmt jeder, anfangs sanfte gurgelnd, in schwachen
Tönen, wieder an;

Allein, kaum daß die süße Drunst in ihren Adern
stärker rann,

So lebet alles. Ihre Freude fängt an sich gleichsam
zu ergießen.

Man sieht und höret ihre Lust aus ihren Rehlen über-
fließen

In unbeschränkter Harmonie. Die Lerche schwingt
sich in die Luft

Mit

Mit hellem Gurgeln hoch empor, bemüht, den Mor-
gen anzugehen,

Und, ehe noch die Schatten fliehn, schon singend in
die Höh zu steigen,

Durch den, von des noch nicht gesunkenen erhabnen
Thaues feuchten Duff,

Da sie dem liederreichen Volck, aus ihrem Schlaf
süß weckend, ruft.

Aus jedem Busch, von jedem Zweige (der weich be-
moset, dich belaubt,

Und seucht annoch vom kühlen Thau, als wie ein Flei-
ner grüner Hagen

Sich über dieser Sänger Haupt,
So sie die ganze Nacht beherbergt, zum Schutz und

auch zur Lust, gebogen)
Erschallt ein fröhliches Concert. Durch diß verwirrte

Gedränge,
Der in die Welt ertönenden, die Lust erfüllenden

Gesänge,
Läßt sich durch einen scharfen Ton, aus allen ange-
stimmten Chören,

Vor andern noch am hellsten hören
Die Wald-Lerch und der Grammet's Vogel. In

dessen lauscht die Nachtigall,
Gönnt ihnen ihre Lust aus Großmuth, zählt ihren

siegesreichen Schall,
Durch den sie aller Vögel Lieder besetzt und fähig zu

verlachen,
Und nimmt sich vor die Nacht darauf noch schöner als
den Tag zu machen.

Der Hänfling pfeift aus einer Hecke, der Stiglitze
zwitschert aus den Büschen,

Die Spreu und Stahren gurgeln dort, die Dross
und Amseln singen hell,
Womit von tausend andern Rehlen sich lockende
Manieren mischen,
Wald wirbelnd, niedrig bald, bald hoch, gekleift
und langsam bald, bald schnell.
Die Kreh, die Dohle nebst dem Raben, die schreyen
fröhlich; doch allein,
Von ihrem Gatten bloß begleitet.
Und stimmen ihre heisse Rehlen mit jenen nicht recht
überein;
So scheinen sie die Dissonanzen des Vollaufs, in
dem Chor, zu seyn.
Singswischen daß die Tureltauben der andern fröhlichen
Gesängen,
Oft ein verliesstes Klage-Gelächter gierend suchen
einzumengen.
Der Vögel ganze Lust ist Liebe. Derselben ganze
Harmonie
Ist bloß der Liebe Stimm' allein, die, so den Vögeln
als dem Vieh
Die Ränke, zugefallen, lehrt. Die Liebe lehrt sie
freundlich seyn,
Und prägt ihren kleinen Seelen ein flattern höfliches
Wesen ein.
Zu Anfang fliegen sie von weiten auf eine ehrebetige
Weise,
Und machen in der dünnen Luft erst größere, dann kleine
Kreise.
Dahin geht ihr, aus tausend Streichen und Wendungen,
gestügt Bemühn,
Den Blick der unachtsamen Liebsten, der abgewandt,
auf sich zu ziehn.

Sie

Sie scheint kaum so bald ein wenig dem regen Antrage
beypflichten,
Als, mit verschönerem Gefieder, voll Hoffnung er
sich zu ihr fügt.
Gleich aber, mit geschwinder Fahrt, verwirret, wie
der rückwärts steigt;
Dann wieder kommt, und endlich sucht bey ihr das
Neußerst auszurichten,
Wogu die strenge Lieb ihn spornt, da sich die bunten
Flügel drehn,
Sich spreizend von einander breiten, und wir an ihm,
da er vergnügt,
Fast alle Federn für Begierde sich dehnen und bewegen
sehn.
So bald ihr Bündnis nun gestiftet, sucht jedes Paar
den dicken Wald,
So, wie die Phantasie, die Nahrung und Lust sie
reißt, zum Aufenthalt,
Damit der große Zweck, die Absicht und das Gesehe
der Natur
Erfüllt werd', als welche ihnen so liebliche Empfind
lichkeiten
Nicht bloß umsonst verlichen hat. Verschiedne suchen
auf der Flur,
Verschiedne auf der Dämme Wipfeln, ihr künstlich
Nestgen zu bereiten;
Verschiedne sieht man ihre Sucht des rauhen Dorns
strauchs starren Klauen
Zu ihrer Sicherheit vertrauen.
Gebornne Stämme dienen oft zu ihrer Jungen Sicher
heit.
Der meisten Nahrung sind Insekten; Aus Moos ist
meist ihr Nest bereit.

Verschiedne finden ihre Wohnung auf kleinen abge-
legnen Hügeln;

An Bächen, welche, durch ihr Murmeln, ihr Ohr
An klaren Seen, worinn sich die Büsch' und ihrer

Zu holden Wiedersehn, bespiegeln.

Verschiedne wissen ihre Nester aus Haar, aus Moos
und andern Sachen

An drey verbundenen Helmchen Schiff besonders
Künstlich fest zu machen.

Sie sieht man überall von ihnen ein fröhliches und em-
siges Eilen,

Und, von fast ungezählten Flügeln, an jedem Ort
die Luft zertheilen.

Die Schwalbe reinigt den Morast vom ähren Thon,
und baut daraus,

Ohn unsre Gegenwart zu scheuen, mit grosser Kunst,
ihr hangend Haus;

Oft sieht man sie mit ihrem Schnabel, vom Vieh und
von der Schaafse Rücken,

In öfters wiederholtem Ziehn, begierig Haar und
Wolle pflücken;

Oft stiehlt sie, von der Scheunen, Stroh, damit die
Jungen sanft sich legen,

Und, in dem wohlbesorgten Nest, bequem und war-
mer ruhen mögen.

Wenn die gedul'ge Mutter nun, von Bärtlichkeit
und Lieb' erhist,

Wodurch sie, recht bewundernswerth, beständig auf
dem Neste sitzt;

So

So sitzt das Männchen gegen über auf einem hoch
erhabnen Ort,

Und singt, mit unverbrosnem Gurgeln, die lange
Weil' ihr gleichsam fort.

Sie bittet ihr geliebtes Männchen, auf kurze Zeit sich
zu bequemen,

Und, da sie karglich Futter nimmt, den Platz auf ih-
rem Nest zu nehmen.

Indessen kommt die Zeit heran, da die genug ge-
wärmte Jungen

Sich ausgedehnt, die, da ihr Kerker, als ihnen
nun zu eng, zerpringen,

Sich nackt nunmehr sehen lassen. Die armen Kin-
derchen verlangen,

Mit nie fast unterbrochnem Schreyn, die nöth'ge
Nahrung zu empfangen.

O welche holde Leidenschaft, voll Sorg' und süßes
Bärtlichkeit,

Erfüllt der neuen Eltern Herz! Sie fliegen, voller
Liebe, fort,

Sie suchen, was der jungen Zucht zur Nahrung dient,
an jedem Ort,

Und bringen, süßlos für sich selbst, es ihnen, da sie
jeden Bissen

Mit einem rich't'gen Maas, in Ordnung, den Jun-
gen auszuthellen wissen.

Sie suchen mehr. Auf diese Weise, die ja wohl recht
bewundernswerth,

Wird, (durch den starken Trieb, der ihnen des Him-
mels Vorsicht eingeprägt,

Und der sie durch das schmachtend' Auge der jungen
Zucht so sehr betveget,

Daß

Es

Daß sie sich selbst der Kost berauben, wie öfters zu geschehen pfl eget,
Da sie den Kleinen alles reichen, das fliegende Geschlecht ernährt.
Diß sind die Sorgen noch nicht alle. Wenn öfters sich dem verflochten Niste naht, so fliehet der Vogel sich davon
In einen nahen Busch, und sucht von dort, mit einem lauten Ton,
Den frechen Schüßer zu verführen. Damit er ihn nun folgen muß;
So fliegt er rings um ihn herum mit einem schwirren den Geschrey;
Ost flattert er, hüpfet auf der Erde, als wenn er nicht recht fliegen könne,
Daß er den Schleicher nach sich zieh', und von dem lieben Nest ihn trenne,
Denn fliegt er schnell gerade fort, bis daß Gefahr und Furcht vorbehey.

Nun aber wollen ihre Jungen nicht länger in dem Kerker bleiben,
Sie schwingen schon die kleinen Flügel, verlangen den Besitz der Luft;
Da denn, bey einem stillen Wetter, das Elternpaar sie lockt und ruft,
Zieh'n ihre Federchen zurecht, belehren sie, befehlen, treiben
Sie endlich aus dem engen Eie. Die milde Luft empfangt und trägt
Nunmehr die Feder-reiche Last. Die junge Zucht erhebt und schlägt

Nun

Nun selbst ihr ungewohnt Gefieder. Die Alten fliegen noch vorher:
Jedoch nur eine kurze Zeit. Und endlich sehn sie sie nicht mehr.
Wer hier nicht eine weise Macht des Schöpfers aller Dinge spüret;
Der scheint gewiß, daß er den Namen vom Menschen gangk mit Unrecht führet.

Wenn wir nun zu des Landmann Wohnung, wo alte Knoten-reiche Eichen
Den Häusern, Scheunen und dem Vorplatz, voll Kühlung, holde Schatten reichen,
Um, in desselben Federvieh, die kluge Wirtschaft anzusehn,
Nachdem wir Geld und Lohd betrachtet; gemacht mit sanften Schritten gehn.
Was findet sich in dem Gwühl, wenn alle durch einander fliegen,
Und ihre Nahrung eifrig suchen, nicht auch für Unmuth und Vergnügen!
Die Henne, voller süßen Sorgen, beruft ihr kirpen des Geschlecht

Mit stetem Glucken um sich her. Der Hahn, stets fertig zum Gefecht,
Scheint, voller Muth, sie zu bewachen; man hört ihn übermüthig frähen.
Sngwischen, daß wir auf dem Teiche die bunt-gesess-ten Endten sehn
Vor ihren Jungen schnatternd schwimmen. Auch schwimmt auf dieser glatten Bahn,
Mit majestätisch-ernstem Anstand und sanftem Stolz, der weiße Schwaan,

Ost

Oft segelter, wenn er die Flügel erhaben von einan-
der breitet,
Und sie, von einem sanften Wind erfüllet, als zwey
Mit rund, gewölbtem Halse, fort. Dort geht voll
Tros der welsche Hahn,
Und kollet, fast bey jedem Triff. Es leget dort der
schöne Pfau
Den Glanz, und Farben, reichen Schweif, voll
Stolz und Liebermuth, zur Schau.
Angewissen, daß die geilen Tauben hellfliegend in
die Lüfte steigen,
Und girrend ihr verliebtes Aug' und wandelbaren Na-
sen zeigen.
Sie suchen hie und dort aus Sträuchen, aus Stroh,
aus Moos und andern Sachen,
So sie in ihren Schnäbeln holen, für ihre Zucht ein
Nest zu machen.
Wie nun bey uns das zahme Vieh die Macht der
holden Liebe fühlt,
So merckt man, wie die süsse Flamme auch in den
wilden Thieren wütht.
Es brüllt der starke Stier voll Drunst, und sucht mit
angestammtem Lauf
Wald die geliebte glatte Kuh, bald seinen frechen
Gegner auf.
Die gelbe Löwin sucht den Löwen, mit ihm sich
brünstig zu vermischen.
Der lahme Woskleyht nach der Wölsin; der plums-
pe Bär, in dunklen Wüsten,
Begehret sich mit seiner Wärrin. Der bunte Eger,
dessen Grimm
Fast aller Grimm noch übertrifft, macht, durch die
fürchterliche Stimm
Sein

Ein schrecklich Liebes-Feuer fund. Der holde Fröh-
ling läßt so gar
Selbst in des Meeres tiefen Gründen der glatt-be-
schuppten Fische Schaar,
Ja selbst den grossen Wasser-Wundern, der Liebe
süsse Flammen fühlen.
Wohlebst sie bald in dunkler Tiefe, bald auf der he-
len Gläbe, spielen.
Doch laßt uns dort die Schärfer sehn, und ihre Feld-
schallmeyen hören!
Sie sitzen dort auf einem Hügel, sehn ihre Heerd
im Grase gehn,
Worinn die jungen Lämmer springen. Laßt uns die
Ziegen hüpfen sehn,
Und merken, wie der Liebe Gluth und eine Eucht sich
zu vermehren,
In ihren warmen Adern walt! Der Hügel scheint
ganz belebt,
Und, durch die grosse Menge, weiß, bis daß der Eucht
fer sich erhebt.
Sie folgen seiner Pfeifen Klang; er schreitet sanft
vor ihnen her,
Und, eh man sich's versteht, ist schon der weisse Hügel
grün und leer.

Was ist denn doch wohl eigentlich die Urfraft und
der rege Hauch,
Der in so wunderbarer Sprache, die mehr gefühlet
wird, als gehört,
Die schnellen Vögel in der Luft, und jedes Thier den
süssen Bruch,
Die holde Kunst der Liebe lehrt;

Wodurch die sanften Regungen sich, voller süßen Lieb-
lichkeiten,
In dieser Sehnen-reichen Körpern, in jener Kleinen
Brust verbreiten?
Wer kan es sonst wohl sehn als Gott? O wahrer
Gott! Der Du allein,
Was ist, und was da lebt, beseest! Der Du, (ein
Geist, der allgemein,
Und ein' ununterbrochne Kraft) bereitest, unterhältst,
durchdringest,
Bewegst und allenthalben wirkst, und das, was
wird, zuwege bringest!
Nur Er allein wirkt, sonder Aufschub, und Er allein
scheint nicht zu wirken.
In dem bewundernswürthen Abriß der so vollkomme-
nen Gestalten,
Die die Materie bezingen,
Und die sie bloß von Ihm erhalten.
Doch ist Er weniger verhohlen, und läßt Er sich in sei-
nen Werken,
Und in dem Firmament des Himmels; die Größe,
reinen Augen mercken.
So wohl die Sonn', als auch der Mond, es sey, daß
die des Tages scheint,
Wie oder jener mit den Schatten den lind- und sauf-
tern Glanz vereinet,
Sind nichts als bloß von Ihm ein Strahl. Es
schimmert, Ihm allein zur Ehr,
Das ungegähste Sternen-Heer,
Und singt in stiller Mitternacht,
Vom tiefen Dencken wohl verstanden, von seines
Schöpfers Wunder-Macht.

Er

Er rinnet. Gleich wird alles still. Die Stürme
zeigen seine Kraft,
Entwurkeln den verwachsenen Wald, und kehren selbst
das Welt-Meer um.
Es ist der rothe Witz kein Scherz, der laute Don-
ner seine Stimme.
Er rührt die Felsen, und sie rauchen. Durch Ihn sind
Völker weggerafft.
Doch wird in solchen strengen Wundern die Gottheit
nicht allein erblicket;
Auch selbst in den gemeinsten Dingen, und überall, ist
Gott zu sehn.
Ein Weiser, welcher um sich her des Geistes forschend
Auge schicket,
Sieht allenthalben sein Regieren, sieht Wunder
überall geschehn.
Zumalen zeigt seine Lieb' und Huld der gute Gott in
dir
Um deinen Scenen, holder Frühling! da Wasser,
Erd und Luft uns hier
Von seiner Güte Zeugniß geben, die einen Fried
voll Süßigkeit,
Du einer fest bestimmten Zeit,
In alle Thiere flößt und prägt, und jährlich ihr nicht
wüßig Herk,
In eine sanfte Fülle schmelzt von Bärtlichkeit, für
Luft und Scherz.
Lob sey Dir, allgemeine Seele des Himmels und
der Erde! Wesen,
Das mächtig und allgegenwärtig, nur Dir sey Ehre,
Lob und Preis!
Dir beug ich meine Knie, Dich hab ich mir zum Gegen-
wurf erlesen,

Wohin

Lobgesang--Brookes' abaptation of Thomson's Hymn to the Seasons. Brookes used this version as an introduction to the Harmonische Himmelslust im Irdischen (Hamburg, 1741).¹

Wohin mein Denken geht und steigt. Nur bios
 Dein Meiser-Finger weisß
 Diß große Gange zu formiren in solcher Vollenkom-
 menheit.
 Durch Dich ziehn alle Zweig' und Kräuter, gehüllet
 in ein Blätter-Kleid,
 Bedeckt von söcheriger Haut, die Himmels-Luft,
 und trincken Thau.
 Durch Dich stehn, als in Hochzeit-Betten, die Pflanz-
 gen in der Erden Bau.
 Es sauget seine saßte Kost ein fester Klump gedrehter
 Röhren.
 Auf Dein Geheiß muß, uns zum Vessen, die Sonn'
 im Fröling wiederkehren,
 Und die erfarrte Gäß erweichen, die durch des Win-
 ters kalten Wind,
 Bis in das Unterse der Wurzel, gedrückt und ge-
 trieben sind,
 Die ißo flüssig circuliren, die, durch die sanfte Gäß-
 rung, steigen,
 Und ungegähste Form- und Farben nunmehr in allen
 Dingen zeigen.
 Du weisßt lebendige Geschöpfe recht wunderbarlich zu
 ernähren,
 Du flößt ihnen Wunder-Eriebe, sich wunderbar-
 lich zu vermehren,
 Und ihr Geschlechte zu erhalten, so weiß, als unbe-
 greiflich, ein.
 Kann denn ein ander Gott, als Du! mit Recht wohl
 angebetet seyn?
 Nur Dich allein hat meine Seele zum Vorwurf ihres
 Diensts erlesen.

Ich

Ich singe denn in tieffter Ehrfurcht, von Anbrunst
 froh, von Andacht heiß:
 Lob sey Dir, allgemeine Seele des Himmels
 und der Erde! Wesen,
 Das mächtig und allgegenwärtig, nur Dir
 allein sey Lob und Preis!

Eileitung.

Ovid.

Nam prius umbrosa carituros arbore montes,
 Et freta velivolos non habitura rates,
 Fluminaque in fontes cursu reditura lupino:
 Gratia quam meriti possit abire Tui.
 Spiritus hic vacuas prius extenuandus in auras
 Ibit, & in tepido deferet ossa rogo,
 Quam subeant animo meritum oblivia nostræ.

Lobgesang.

Wo'ger Urstand aller Dinge! Herr und Vater der
 Natur!
 Alles zeigt, und verbirgt Dich. Dich nicht,
 aber Deine Spur
 Lassen alle Wesen sehn. Das veränderliche Jahr
 Ist von Deiner Allmacht voll, macht Dein Daseyn offen-
 bahr.

In dem lächelnden, gefärbten, Lust- und Schimmer-
 reichen Lenzten,
 Sieht man Strahlen Deiner Liebe, Huld und Bärtlich-
 keiten glängen.

¹ Above, pp. 298, 303 ff.

2. Einleitung.

Auf der neubefruchteten Gipfel, angefruchteten schosfen
Hohn,

In den Kräuter-reichen Thälern kann man jetzt die Götter
heißt sehn.

Dein beständig Wort: Es werde! füllt jetzt die flachen
Felder.

Durch Dein lieblich Wollen, leben und belauben sich
die Wälder.

Balsam haucht die Luft durch Dich. Selbst die kalten
Gluthen glühen,

Uns zur Luft und Kost belebt. Kräuter grünen, Blumen
blühen.

Amuth herrscht jetzt überall, und es wird in unsrer Brust
Selbst das Herz zu lauter Freude, jeder Sinn zu lauter
Luft.

Dann erscheint in stärkerm Glanz einer ersten Herr-
lichkeit,

Mit vermehrtem Licht und Hitze, Deine Huld zur Som-
mers Zeit.

Dann durchstrahlt der hohen Sonne kräftige Vollkom-
menheit

Das von Früchten schwangre Jahr. Dann läßt sich,
zu Deinen Ehren,

Auch zum Ruh der Erd' und Luft, Deine Stimm im
Donner hören,

Welche wir bey kühlen Bächen, und in Wäldern, so gelinde
Nicht nicht weniger vernehmen in dem kispeln lauer Winde.

Was uns durch die Gluth der Sonne jetzt gar zu warm
und schwül,

Mildern die gewach'ne Schatten, machens angenehm und
kühl.

Einleitung.

3

Deine Güte läßt den Herbst überschwenglich sonder
Grenzen,

Nicht als eine Giegens-Fluth, in gefärbten Früchten,
glänzen,

Die, in einem bunten Regen, von den Bäumen sich er-
gießt,

Und in uns're Vorraths-Derter, gleichsam als mit Strö-
men, fließt,

Gür des nicht mehr fernen Winters uns bedrohende Ge-
fahren,

Als der unfruchtbar an allem, zu versorgen, zu bewahren.

Das jetzt fett gewordne Maß-Vieh, der gepreßte süße
Wein,

Füllt in dieser Zeit die Kichen, strömt in uns're Keller
ein.

In dem Winter siehet man Dampf und Nebel, Sturm
und Schrecken

Oft mit Dunctelheit und Schwärze Deinen hellen Thron
bedecken.

Von der Wirbel-Winde Flügeln scheint Du, als auf ei-
nem Wagen,

Ernschaft, mächtig, und in Wolcken fürchterlich empor ge-
tragen.

Jetzt siehet man erstarret, bloß von Deiner Macht die
Spur.

Du erniedrigst, durch den Frost und den Nord-Wind,
die Natur.

Doch die Unbequemlichkeit dieser rauhen Zeit zu mindern,
Ehrentest Du uns Holz und Pelswerk, den zu strengen

Frost zu lindern.

4 Einleitung.

O Geheimniß voller Reiz! welche Weisheit strahlt aus
 Dir,
 Welche Göttliche Gewalt, welche Lieb' und Huld herfür!
 Ein fast nicht gespürter Zug, einfach und dennoch ge-
 menget,
 Mit so sanfter Harmonie süß vereinet, preßt und drenget
 (Da stets eins dem andern folgt) eins das andre nach
 und nach,
 In beständig reger Stille, und nicht fühlbar, allgemach,
 Daß auf wunderbare Weise solch ein Gang daraus ent-
 steht,
 So fast allezeit erscheineth, und fast allezeit vergehet.

Aber wir, mit stumpfen Blicken und nicht sehendem Ge-
 sicht,
 Merken darinn keine Wunder, spüren Gottes Finger
 nicht.

Nur auf Eitelkeit bedacht, will man hiervon nichts versehen,
 Noch die überall zu sehnde Macht und Weisheit Des nicht
 sehen,
 Welcher, unaufhörlich, kräftig, die erhabnen Ephären
 lenket,
 In geheimen Tiefen wirket, alles dünsen läßt, und sproß-
 fen.

Voraus, wann der holde Leuchten recht mit Schönheit
 überfließen,
 Aller Glanz und Schimmer quillt, wodurch Wärm' und
 Licht sich senket,
 Aus der Sonnen Flammen - Meer, wodurch alles sich
 erhebet,
 Und wodurch, nicht minder ausbar, man die Stürme
 tauschen höret.

5 Einleitung.

In wodurch, wann dieser Circel, voller Segen, sich ver-
 neuet,
 Jede Nerve, von Entzückung innerlich gerührt, sich
 freuet.

Höre triftige Natur! Bring' und binde doch zusammen,
 Alle lebendige Geelen unterm weiten Stern-Isthan,

Gott, den Schöpfer, zu verehren! In vergnügten An-
 dachts-Flammen

Steig' ein allgemeines Lob-Lied überall jest Himmels an!

Hauchet sanft, gelinde Winde! dort, wo kühle Dun-
 stheiten,

In ensfernten stillen Wäldern, fast mit einem heiligen
 Schrecken,

Die bemoosten Klüfte füllen, und die Gegenden bedecken:

Um, von Dem, die weise Liebe, sammt der Allmacht aus-
 zubreiten,

Dessen Geist euch hauchen lehr! Ihr Gewaltigen hina-
 gegen,

Deren weit gehörtes Blasen oft die Erde will be-
 wegen,

Hebet euren heiligen, fürchterlichen Schall gen Himmel!
 Offenbahret mit lauten Tönen und mit brausendem Ge-
 tümmel

Den, durch Dessen Macht ihr rast. Häuscht ihr Wäch-
 sein Ihm zu Ehren!

Lass't mich ever zitternd, rieselnd, hoch- und sanftes Lob-
 Gethön,

Wann ich, euch zur Seiten, singe, mit gerührtem Geiste,
 hören!

Wider, weiß beschäumter Gießbach, sanftere Stürzen
 zwischen Höhn,

Einleitung.

Daf, so wohl die stille Nacht, als der Tag des Schöpfers
 Ueberall erhebe, preise, lobe, rühme und vermehre.

Fürst der Erde, Mensch! für den sich die ganze
 Schöpfung schmückt,
 Haupt und Herz und Mund, von allem, was man auf
 der Welt erblickt,
 Krone dieses grosse Lied! In dem schwärmenden Gefimmel
 Großer angefüllter Städte, laß, mit dringendem Gewimmel,
 Ein Zusammenfluß von Menschen, mit der Orgel tiefem
 Klang,

Stimme, Thon und Schall verbinden! Laß, bald in ver-
 einten Chören,
 Bald bey einer stillen Pause, von dem heilen Lob-Gesang,
 Bloß begleitet von dem Bass, nur allein die Stimme hören!
 Laß die einzelne Natur, laß so Harmonie als Kunst,
 In vermischter Symphonie, hier erschallen und sich zeigen!
 Laß den Ausbruch froher Trieb', angefaßt von heil'ger

Drust,
 Aus gerührter Seel' und Brust überlaut gen Himmel steigen!
 Oder, wo du lieber willst, einsam, abgelegne Felder,
 Oder auch geweihte Schatten düsterer, bemoster Wälder
 Dir zum Tempel der Natur, aus geheimen Trieb der
 Seelen

Und aus einer stillen Andacht, zu des Schöpfers Ehre,
 wehen;

O so zieh' den Geist zusammen! O so dichte, lobe, singe,
 Durch die Sinnen fast entzückt, dem Regierer aller Dinge,
 Dem, der Laub und Gras läßt wachsen, der so Welt als
 Himmel ziert,

Der zumahl die Jahres-Zeiten in so holdem Wechsel führt,

Einleitung.

In der stillen Einsamkeit, stille Lieder! fühle, schmecke,
 Wie dein Gott, dein Herr, dein Schöpfer überall sich
 dir entdecke!

Ich will wenigstens die Wunder, um je mehr und mehr
 zu fassen,

Wie so herrlich unser Gott, nimmer aus den Sinnen
 lassen;

Und, eh' ich vom bunt gefärbten, angenehmen, holden
 Glänzen,

Eines allbelebenden, lauen, Blumen-reichen Lenzens;
 Eh' ich von des schwülsten Sommers Fruchts und Beegen-

reicher Pracht,
 Der uns Kranz und Nahrung reißt, der das Geld zu

Golde macht;
 Eh' ich von dem kühlen Herbst, trübsig und gekrönt mit

Früchten,
 Auch vom Silberglanz des Winters, von dem Frost und

Schnee zu fichten,
 Und in ihrem steten Wechsel Gottes Wunder zu ermessen,

Seine Lieb' und Macht zu preisen, werde, kann und will
 vergessen;

Eh' soll meine Zunge stumm, meine rege Phantasie
 Leer von Kraft und Bildern seyn, und mein freyer Geist

nicht frey.
 Meine Lunge wird vergessen, sich, zum Athem ziehn, zu regen;

Eh' vergift mein Herz zu klopfen, und mein Blut sich zu
 bewegen.

Sollte mich das ernste Schicksal in entlegne Wüsten
 bringen,

An der Erden aufre Grenzen, selbst in ein barbarisch Land,

Fernere Betrachtung des der Erde so nützlichen Welt=Meers a poem based on Pluche's Spectacle de la Nature.

Fernere Betrachtung des der Erde so nützlichen Welt=Meers.

Nach Anleitung des Spectacl. de la Nat.
 Nachdem wir nun das weite Meer, als wie ein göttlich Werk, ermessen:
 Fast uns desselben unbeschreiblich und größten Nutzen nicht vergessen.
 Wir werden, wenn wir diß mit Ernst, und wie man billig sollt, ergründen,
 Des Meeres und der Sonnen Wunder, zu Gottes Ehr, ausnehmend finden.
 Unmöglich könnt' der Erdens Kreis im Stande, wie er ist, bestehn,
 Auf's wenigst müßte, was da lebte, unselbar sterben und vergehn,
 Wenn wir nicht Fluß und Regen hätten. Nun zeigt sich, daß von Fluß und Regen,
 Und von dem, bloß allein durch sie, bey uns gewirkt, ten Wunder, Regen,
 Das Meer, der Ursprung und die Quelle. Diß Wunder ist wahrhaftig werth,
 Daß man die Weisheit, Lieb und Allmacht desjenigen in Demuth ehrt,
 Und die Bewunderswerthe Ordnung, auf welche Weise diß geschieht,
 Mit ehrebetiger Lust betrachte. Es kommen, durch das Sonnen-Licht,
 Wie alle Tropfen in dem Regen, auch alle Wäch und Ströme her,
 Aus dem Behälter aller Wasser, dem ja so tief, als weiten Meer,
 Wie

um daselbst verborgne Sturen, Ufer die uns unbekant,
 Es sey Osten oder Westwärts, zu betrachten, zu besingen;
 Würd' ich nicht darüber klagen, wär' Ich, ihm zu folgen, fertig.
 GOETZ ist, überall gefüßt, allenthalben gegenwärtig.
 Die verbundene Jahres-Zeiten weisen sich in regen Reihen,
 In den angefüllten Städten, in den leeren Wüsteneyen,
 Durch den Erdkreis überall. Da ihr Wechsel nimmer ruht,
 Ueberall beträchtlich, nützlich, heilsam überall, und gut.
 Seit daß Er das große Ganze schuf, beselet und regiert,
 Weiß Sein weis und mächt'ges Lieben überall aus allen Dingen,
 Selbst aus dem was übel scheint, etwas Guts heraus zu bringen;
 Welches Er denn stets zum Bessern, und noch stets zum Bessern führt,
 Bis zum Fortgang, der unendlich. Aber weiter geh' ich nicht.
 Ich verkler' mich selbst in Ihm. In Sein unausdrücklich Licht
 Sinc' ich und vergehe ganz. Kommt denn mehr beredtes
 Seinen Preis und Seine Größe zu besingen und zu zeigen!*)
 *) Dieses Gedicht ist nach Anleitung eines berühmten englischen Dichters, Mr. Tomson, verfertigt worden.



¹Above, pp. 236-237.

Wie schwer es auch zu glauben scheint. Daß sich, aus Dünstungen allein, So ungeheurer Flüsse-Menge ohn Unterlaß ins Meer ergießen, Von welchen viel, in einer Weise, von mehr als achtzig Meilen, fließen, Nebst allen Wassern auf der Welt, scheint keine Möglichkeit zu seyn, Ob sichs gleich wirklich so verhält. Der hellen Sonnen Wunder-Strahl zieht aus der zweiten Wasser-Welt, dem Meer, und dessen Abgrunds-Thal, Durch des allmächtigen Schöpfers Ordnung, solch Von Dünsten, in die dünne Luft, daß man die Luft mit Recht wird können, Ein ungemessenes Reich von Dünsten, von feuchten Dünsten eine See, Die größer, als die Tiefe selber, und Sammlung großer Wasser, nennen, Die aber droben, durch die Dünne, in solchen Stand gesetzt werden, Daß sie, durch Steigen und durch Sinken, zum Auf und Besen unsrer Erden, Bereit und erhalten sind. Aus deren Menge denn nicht nur die Däche, Ström und Flüsse, auch alle andre Feuchtigkeiten, Die allen Pflanken, allen Thieren, im Thranck, die Nahrung zubereiten, Nur bloß entstehen, zugerichtet, und wie sie sind, formirt seyn.

Nun ist des Meeres Salzigkeit für uns ein fast un-
schätzbar Gut, Und

Und welches ihm, aus weiser Absicht, so, wie das Licht der Sonnen Gluth, Zu Anfang wirklich anerkschaffen, nicht aber, wie man etwan meynet, Und wie es, aus verschiednen Gründen, den Forschern der Natur-Kraft scheint, Als ob es sein so nöthig Salz, von seinen Ufern oder Bette, Und unterirdischen Gängen löge, und es nicht wirklich in sich hätte. Indem, bey näherer Untersuchung, wie tief man auch das Meer ergründet, Dennoch auf dessen tiefem Boden, von Salz sich keine Spur befindet. Diß Meeres Salz nun, daß es nicht in steter Stille sinken möchte, Und folglich die geschwächte Kraft der Erden mindern Nutzen brächte, Wird es, o Wunder! unaussprechlich, und stets durch Ebb und Gluth, gerührt, Und die beständig regen Theile an allen Orten hinführt.

Wo etwas unsers Schöpfers Weisheit, und seine Macht und Liebe weist, Wo etwas seine Absicht, Ordnung, und nie begriffene Wunder preiset, Wo was Bewunderung verdient: So ist es warlich Ebb und Gluth, Se minder sie begreiflich ist. Es hat der Schöpfer nicht allein

Dem Meer, das, wenn sichs nicht bewegt, und immer würde stille seyn, Verderben und verderben würde, die Wind und ihre strenge Wuth,

Aus

Aus weiser Absicht zugetheilet. Er hat, weil dieß noch zu flüchtig und ungewis, ein andres Mittel, das unveränderlich und richtig, Das Meer in steter Bewegung zu unterhalten, aufgefunden,

Und dadurch Nutzen und Ergeßen recht unverbessersich verbunden.

Daß wir den eigentlichen Grund von diesem Wund, der nur nicht fassen, Colljemand, der es untersucht, sich billig nicht bes fremden lassen.

Denn, alle Dinge fassen wollen, ist stolzer Hochmuth; und hingegen

Daß, so wir unserm Schöpfer schuldig, für seine Güth, rung, nicht erwegen,

Ist ein fast mehr als viehisches Betragen und Unweisheit,

Da gegen seine Macht und Liebe, Verachtung und Undankbarkeit.

Sind solche grosse Wunder. Werke nicht unserer Betrachtung werth,

Und daß man dessen Weisheit, Ordnung, Regierung, Führung, Lieb und Macht,

Der den Zusammenhang der Dinge geordnet und hervorgebracht,

Nach allen unsers Geistes Kräften, in frölicher Bewunderung, ehrt?

Diß Meer, Salz nun, das alle Wasser, auch Fisch, in ihrer Daur erhält,

Hat, ausser diesen Nutzbarkeiten, zu der Erhaltung unsrer Welt,

Noch zweyerley, so sehr beträchtlich. Das erste, daß die dünnen Schelle,

Ohn alle Hinderung, sonder Anstand und ungehemmt, in steter Eile,

Durch die erhöhnde Kraft der Sonnen, sich mit den Dünsten aufwärts heben,

Und dadurch Luft und Erd und Pflanz die Fruchtbarkeit beständig geben.

Das andre, daß die schweren Schelle, zu starker Dünstung widerstreben,

Weil sonst zu viele Feuchtigkeiten sich in die Luft erhöhen möchten,

Die denn, in gar zu vielem Regen, gewis der Erde Schaden brächten.

Das Salz ist mit des Wassers Wesen recht innerlich vereint und fest,

Wodurch sichs, durch der Sonnen Wärme, davon nicht gerne trennen läßt,

Und da es, in der dünnen Luft, die Wirkungen der Wärmehindert,

Sind, bis zur rechten Regensmaasse, die Dünstungen dadurch gemindert.

Gemehr die Wärme Scheitschen Salz begegnet, die ihr widerstehn,

Se minder sind der Wasser Scheitschen, die sich durch ihre Kraft erhöh'n,

Da nemlich das vorhandne Salz das Wasser in sich schwerer macht,

So wird der Wärme Zug gemindert und in die rechte Maass gebracht.

Wir haben denn dem Meer-salz mehr, als wie man glauben wird, zu danken,

Denn, durch dasselbe bleibt die Menge des süßen Wassers in den Schranken,

So sonst, durch die zu schwere Menge, und von der Feuchtigkeiten Würde,

Anstatt uns Fruchtbarkeit zu schaffen, den Erdenkreis erschöpfen würde.

Wann oben nun gemeldet worden, es kämen, einzig aus dem Meer, die grossen Wasser aller Flüsse, der Regen auch, aus Dünsten her,

So fast unmöglich scheinen will, da wir ja Wasser, ströme kennen,

Die mit so ungeheurem Guß, der mehr als achzig Meilen breit,

Mit einer schrecklich schweren Last, in nimmer unterbrochnem Drennen,

Fast jeden Augenblick ein Meer ins Meer, mit sterner Hestigkeit,

Und einem solchen Druck und Drang, ergiessen, süßgen, welken, treiben,

Dasses kein Sinn zu fassen tüchtig, und keine Feder zu beschreiben:

So ist es billig unsre Pflicht, um unsers Schöpfers Macht zu preisen,

Dass alle Flüsse, Teich- und Seen, aus Dünsten stammen, zu ertweisen.

Diß kan, mit größter Deutlichkeit, mehr überzeuglich nicht geschehn,

Als wenn wir, was Erforschungen, nebst der Erfahrung, zeigen, sehn;

Es haben viele weise Männer, an manchem Ort, sich unterwunden,

Zu untersuchen, wie viel Regen, in einem Jahr, auf unsre Welt,

Wohl fallen möcht, wozu sie denn, ein groß Gefäß hinaus gestellt,

Entfernt von Häusern und Gebäuden. Da sie denn mehrentheils gefunden,

Wenn

Wenn sie, nach einem jeden Regen, die Höh bemerckt, sie aufgeschrieben,

Und endlich ordentlich addirt, daß es bey zwanzig Daumen blieben,

So in Paris sowohl, als Zürich, in London und in Amsterdam,

In einem Jahr geregnet hab. Aus diesen laßt sich billig schließen,

Daß auf dem gangen Kreis der Welt, in dieser Masse ungesehr,

Und eins ins andere gerechnet, bald minder und bald etwas mehr,

Die Dünste, die zu Regen worden, nach allem Ansehn, fallen müssen.

Doch, um noch mehrer Nichtigkeit, und Ordnung, laßt uns uns bequemem,

Und bloß nur fünfzehn Daumen hoch, an statt der zwanzig, annehmen:

So wird sich dennoch so viel zeigen, daß, bloß auf einer Ruthen Erden,

Auf fünf und vierzig Füße Wasser, in einem Jahre, fallen werden,

Den Guß gewürffelt angenommen. Diß wird auf sechzig Meilen nun,

So wie man sie in Frankreich hat, im Jahr auf vierzehn mehr noch thun,

Als sieben hundert Milliarden, nebst hundert fünfzig Millionen,

Dergleichen Subser Flüsse Wasser. Nun hat ja Frankreichs stärkster Guß,

Die Seine nemlich, ihren Stoff aus einem Dunst und Regen-Guß.

Sie haben denn die Seine selber bey dieser Wasser-Last betrachtet,

Und

Und daß sie lange nicht so groß, mit vielem Fleiß und Ernst, beachtet.

Bequem dazu nun zu gelangen;
Hat ein vernünftiger Warriotte sie so zu messen angefangen.

Die Loubre-Brücke, so die Seine durch Pfeiler in die Enge schließt,

Und unter deren breiten Bogen ihr Wasser unaufhörlich fließet,

Ist auf vier hundert Füße breit,
Das Wasser ist fünf Füße tief, woraus zwey tausend Fuß entstehen.

Um nun den Raum zu übersehn,
Den die zwey tausend Füße laufen, in einer angesehten Zeit,

Warfer ins Wasser einen Stock, und merket in dessen Schnelligkeit,

Zugleich die Schnelligkeit des Wassers, und fand, daß immer eine Länge

Auf die zwey hundert fünfzig Füße, in einer jeglichen Minute,

Durch die gewölbten Bogen-Gänge,
Sich unaufhörlich drang und floß. Allein, wir wollen uns bequemen,

Und weil der Seine rege Fluth
Nicht immer gleich geschwinde läuft; nicht mehr, als hundert Füße, nehmen,

An statt zweyhundert fünfzig Füße; So kan ein jeder leicht erfahren,

Daß die zwey tausend Cubische Füße, die jetzt noch an der Brücke waren,

In einer einzigen Minute schon hundert Füße sich entsernt,

Woraus man überzeuglich lernt,
Daß an so viel zwey tausend Füßen sie hinter sich her kaum gemacht,

Aus sie, auf ihrer stillen Reise, an Füßen einzelne vollbracht.

Hierauf nun trift, ohn allen Zweifel und Fehls, die Rechnung richtig ein,

Es müssen von dergleichen Wasser, an solchen würfflichten Füßen,

In einer einzigen Minute, auf zweymal hundert tausend fließen.

Vermehret man nun diese Zahl mit sechzig; sind, in einer Stunde,

Zwölf Millionen solcher Füße, und noch an Millionen, acht,

Mehr als zwey hundert achtzig noch, in einem Tag und einer Nacht,

Dahin geflossen und gefahren:
Im Jahr ein solglich hundert fünf, an wohlgezählten

Und hundert zwanzig Millionen darüber. Also siehet man,

Daß diese Zahl, wie groß sie auch, doch an der Wasser, Füße Zahl,

Im Regen, als die sechsmal größer, auf keine Weise reichen kan,

Da sie auf sieben hundert vierzehn, von Millionen, sich erstreckt,

Und hundert fünfzig Millionen darüber. Hieraus wird entdeckt,

Wie in den Dünsten, Schnee und Regen, solch eine Last vom Wasser steeht,

Woraus fast fünfmal so viel Füße, als wie wir haben, könnten werden.

Ber nun, mit menschlichem Gemüth, die Wunder der Ordnung überlegt

Und wie, durch solche Macht und Weisheit, der Bau des Wassers und der Erden, auf eine solche weise Weise, regieret wird, mit Ernst erwegt,

Und dann kein herrlich Regiment, kein Allmacht, kein
ne Gottheit spürt,
Die solche ungeheure Körper, so leicht, so ordentlich
regiert;
Wie wird doch der sich selbst vernünftig, begabt mit
einer Seele, nennen,
Und, zum verständigen Geschöpf, gemacht zu seyn,
Milton's "Morning Prayer", verlangen können?

Auer dieser Creaturen Herrlichkeit und Wunder,
der Pracht,
Ist, o Vater alles Guten! durch Dein Allmacht
bloß, gemacht!
Dieß so wunderwunderschöne Welt-Gebänd'
ist einzig Dein.
Welch ein Wortwurf des Erstaunens mußt Du
nun wol selbst nicht seyn!
O du unaussprechlicher! Deßsen Sitz der Him-
mel ist,
Ja weit über alle Himmel, der Du uns unsicht-
bar bist,
Oder in der Dämmerung Deiner allersehltesten
Werke,
Nur allein von uns zu sehn! welche doch noch deut-
lich zeigen,
Daß Dein unbegreifliches Lieben, daß die Weis-
heit, Macht und Stärke
Deiner unumschränkten Gottheit, unsern Geist
weit übersteigen.
Redet ihr! die ihr viel besser, als wir können, re-
den könnt,
Ihnetes Kinder, heiligen Engel, weil euch, Ihr
zu sehn, vergönt;
Die ihr mit Gesäng' und Psalmen euch, Ihr zu
erhöhn bestrebt,
Und mit ungezählten Chören, in so rein so hellem
Licht,

Welch

Eine Lehrreiche Geschichte. 365

Welches keine Nacht bekränzt, noch die Klar-
heit unterbricht,
Unaussörlich jubilierend, Seinen heiligen Thron
umgibt.
Ihr! durch die im Himmel droben, und nicht min-
der hier auf Erden,
Aller Creaturen Schaaren zu dem Zweck vereinet
werden,
Ihn zu loben, als den Ersten, als den Letzten, und
zugleich
Als den Mittelssten ohn End'. Und du schönster
Stern der Sternen,
Den man von dem Nacht-Gestirn sich am spätesten
sieht entfernen,
Wo du nicht vielmehr gehörest zu der Morgenrö-
the Reich,
Der du als ein sicherer Vorthe eines nahen Tages
glänzt,
Und mit deinem hellen Strahl den verjüngten Mor-
gen frängst;
Lobe du, in deinem Kreis, unsern Schöpfer in der
Zeit
Dieses neugebohrnen Tages, voller Lust und Süß-
igkeit.
Sonne, die du Aug' und Seele dieser weiten
Welt! erkenne
Ihn für deinen Oberherrn. Es erschall sein Lob-
gesang
Ehets in deines ew'gen Laufs nimmer ruhendem
Gerenne,
Wenn du steigst, auch am Mittag, und bey dei-
nem Untergang.

Mon!

566 Eine Lehr, reiche Geschichte.

Mond! der, da du jetzt der Sonne früh bege-
 nest, dich entziehst,
 Und, mit denen besten Sternen, nebst derselben
 Kreise, fliehst,
 Worinn sie beständig gehn! Und ihr andern fünf!
 Die ihr
 Im geheimen Tanz beständig, sonder Ruhe, für
 und für,
 Euch nicht sonder Klang bewegt, lobet Den, durch
 Den das Licht,
 Aus der Finsterniß gerufen, in so helle Strahlen
 bricht!
 Luft! und alle Elementen! ältste Kinder der
 Natur,
 Die ihr weiter Schooß erzeugt! die, ohn daß ihr
 je verweilt,
 Uns Geviert, in vielgeformten, regen Zirkeln, laus-
 set, eilet,
 Alles mischt, und alles nährt! laßt, dem grossen
 Gott zu Ehren,
 In beständig neuer Aenderung, neue Lieder jauch-
 zend hören.
 Nebel! Dünste die ihr salb, grau und schmutzig,
 bis die Strahlen
 Unser Sonnen euch den Saum übergülten und
 bemahlen,
 Ob ihr in verdünneten, allgemach erhabnen Däften,
 Aus den feuchten Seen steigt, oder aus der Ver-
 ge Krüften,
 Dem zum Ruhm, Der alle Welt wunderbar her-
 vorgebracht,
 Ob ihr, am gefärbten Himmel, einen Schmuck
 in Wolken macht,
 Und

Eine Lehr, reiche Geschichte.

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Und, zu diesem Endweß sanft, euch unsichtbar
 hebt und steigt,
 Oder wenn ihr euch, die Erd' auch zu tränken, ab-
 werts neiget,
 Auf, vermehret Seinen Ruhm! Auf, vermehret
 auch ihr, ihr Winde!
 Die ihr aus vier Himmels- Theilen heftig bald,
 und bald gelinde,
 Weht und blaset, Seinen Ruhm! Auch ihr Sich-
 ten! nebst dem Meer
 Aller Pflanzen / die, durch sie, eure Wipfel oft
 bewegt,
 Dieget euer Haupt, zum Zeichen eurer Demuth,
 Ihm zur Ehr!
 Auch ihr Brunnen / die ihr wirbelnd fließt, und
 ein Geräusch erregt,
 Welches sanft und lieblich klingt, rauscht und wir-
 belt Ihm zum Preise!
 Alle Seelen / die ihr lebt! Vögel / die ihr steigt
 im Singen,
 Eraget Seinen Ruhm empor, so im Ton, als auf
 den Schwingen!
 Ihr, die ihr in Wassern glüht! Ihr, die auf
 dem Erden- Kreise
 Prächtig tretet, oder kriechet, zeuget, ob, so früh
 als spät,
 Meine Zunge, Hügel, Thäler, Brunnen, oder
 frische Schatten,
 Gott zu rühmen, zu beehren, einmal wol geschwie-
 gen hat,
 Die mein stetiger Gesang, als womit sie stets sich
 gatten,

N n 4

So

Wer ist, der dieses Wunder faßt, wie nemlich
Gras die Thiere nährt,
Die sich sein bitterer Saft in Fleisch und süsse
Milch verschre,
Und wie es einem muntren Pferde so viele Stärck und
Kraft gewähret?
Versuch es jemand und zerquetsche das Gras, filtrire,
press, gedrücke,
Sa Koch und distillir es gar, ob sichs nur einst zur
Suppe schicke,

Die essbar ist, da in den Ethern der Klüb, es lieblich
zugeleicht
Und wunderbar bereitet wird, daß es uns nähret und
erquict.

Mit diesem Wunder geht es nun so, wie es mit
den meisten Wercken
Des lieblich-weisen Schöpfers geht,
Daß wir darauf so wenig mercken,
Weiles, ohn unsre Sorge, Müh und Fleiß, ganz
von sich selbst entsteht,
Dreht unter unsern Füßen wächst, da doch daran so
viel gelegen,
Da es ein unvermiffliches Gut und ein so wunderbarer
Gegen,
Daß, wenn uns etwan strenge Dürre das Gras von
unsern Wiesen frist,
Der Ackerbau sogleich zerstört und alles in Ver-
wirrung ist.
Da die nothwendigen Pferde fehlen, die Thiere, die
uns Nahrung gönnen,
Und so viel Gutes thun, sind weg, weil sie sich nicht
mehr nähren können.
Ein dürer Wind versengt das Gras, worauf wir
mit den Füßen gehn,
Und gleich wird man die ganze Menschheit verwirrt
und unglücklich sehn.

So zum Klang als Wiederhall Seines Ruhms
geschickt gemacht.
Dir / allgegenwärt'ger Herr! sey mein Morgens-
Gruß gebracht!
Ach! erbarme Dich, gieb uns, ew'ge Güte, nichts
als Gutes.
Wo die Nacht auch etwas Böses hatt' erzeugt
und verborgen;
So vertilg es, wie die Schatten jetzt vertilgt der
helle Morgen.

Nach Noch ein Anhang zur Wiese,

Anleitung des Spectacle de la Nature.

Mein der allergröste Nutzen, den wir noch von den
Wiesen ziehn,
Ist, daß dieselben ohne Kosten, und, sonder daß wir
uns bemühen,
Die Thiere, deper wir im Leben fast nicht vermögen
zu entbehren,
Durch ihr von selbst sich zeugend Futter im vollen Ue-
berfluß ernähren.

Der Ochse, dessen Fleisch uns speiset, sowol als jener,
der uns pflügen
Und unsern Acker bauen hilft, läßt sich im Gras und
Kraut genügen.
Das Pferd, das auf verschiedne Weise, so daß man
sie kaum zählt, uns dient,
Verlangt zur Belohnung nichts, als was auf unsern
Wiesen grünt.
Es wirft sich gleichsam in dieselben mit munterm An-
stand selbst hinein,
Nach seiner Arbeit, und verlangt sonst nicht von uns
verpflügt zu seyn.
Die Kuh, von welcher wir zum Leben, so manchen
Neytrag all empfangen,
Wird, anders nichts dafür von uns, als unser Wie-
sen Frucht, verlangen.
Die Wollen-reiche Zucht der Schaafe, die uns so
peissen als auch kleiden,
Sind für die Gaben wohl zufrieden mit dem Genuß
von unsern Weiden.

¹ Above, p. 240.

Belustigende und erbauliche Morgen-Gedancken.

Nach Anleitung Mr. Thomsons.
Es läßt das sanfte Morgen-Licht im bunten Osten
sich schon sehn,
Die kühle Milch der grünen Pflanzen, der Schau,
sinckt aus der grauen Höh'n.
Man siehet an der dünnen Luft unsichtbarn Kreyßes
äußern Grenzen,
Und, in und durch denselben Körper, der Dämmerung
annoch schwaches Glänzen
Sieh mit den dunklen Schatten mischen, und sie
gemach, gemach besiegen.
Die Nacht entweicht mit tragem Schritt, der junge
Tag erscheint schnell,
Formiret eine schöne Weite, um unsre Augen zu
vergnügen.
Er zieht vor einem schönen Schauplag die Decke
weg, macht alles hell,
Und stellet, was vor unser Aug' sich durch die Duncel-
heit verlor,
Als würd' es fast aufs neu-erschaffen, uns, durch den
Wechsel, schöner vor.
Der fernen Berge neblig-Haupt, der hohen Felsen
feuchte Gipfel,
Der träußenden gebognen Bäume gewölbte Wols-
cken-gleiche Wipfel
Erscheinen, nehmen sichtbarlich, mit dem gestärkten
Tage, zu.
Was bis daher im Schlaf begraben, wird munter,
und verläßt die Ruh.

Auf

Morgen-Gedancken.

Auf Feldern hinckt schon hie und dort, im feuchten
grünlich-grauen Grase,
Mit einem ungeschickten Hüpfen, der feige lang-ge-
ohrte Haase.
In Wäldern siehet das leichte Wild den unverhofften
Bandersmann,
Mit flugigen verführten Däcken, und ausgereckten
Hälsen, an.

Ein' unermuthete Music erwachet gleichsam hin
und wieder,
In gang verschiednen Tönen schallen der Creaturen
Morgen-Lieder.
Der Vögel angenehmes Gurgeln, der Ochsen und
der Schaafe Blesken,
Das helle Wiehern muntre Pferde, der frühen
Hähne scharfes Krähn,
Das hohle Wirren treuer Tauben, der Enten schnat-
terndes Getön
Formieren eine Harmonie. Sie scheinen gleichsam
zu entdecken,
Daß sie dem, der sie schuf, zur Ehr, mit Freuden
leben, fühlen, schmecken.
Will denn der, sich zum Schaden, faul, und träge
Mensch das Bett nicht lassen,
Des kühlen Morgens zu genießten, den lieblichen Ge-
ruch zu fassen,
Der aus bethauten Blumen quillt? Will er der still-
en Stunden sich
Denn nicht erfreuen, die zum Denken und frohen
Danken eigentlich
Bestimmt und ihm gesendet scheinen? Will man,
daß so viel Guts zu pflügen,
Denn

Es

¹ Above, p. 300.

Denn, in der That sich selbst bestehend, so viele Lust
mit Fleiß verlieren?
Will man die schönste Zeit des Lebens, die eigentlich
für uns geschaffen,
Nur unvernünftigen Thieren lassen, und sie verschma-
hen und verschlafen?
Ist es erlaubt, in gleichsam todrer Vergessenheit, in
schwarzen Träumen,
Den schönsten Theil von unsrer Zeit, den frischen
Morgen, zu versäumen?
Da, leider! tausend Menschen sterben, die, wie die
frühe Zeit so schön,
Wie lieblich denn die Welt geschmückt, auch nicht
ein einzigmal gesehn.
Wie werden wir, da Gott der Herr uns so viel
Gutes wollen gönnen,
Und wir es gleichsam von uns stossen, doch unser Thun
beschöner können?

Erwacht! dort steigt des hellen Tages durchlauch-
tiger Monarch hervor,
Mit güldnem Glanz und Licht gekrönt. Es über-
schwebt ihm sein Strahlen-Heer
Die ganze sichtbare Natur, als wie mit einem Ge-
gens-Meer.
Es wird der, erst durch ihn so schön geschmückt ge-
wesen, Wolken-Flor,
Durch seine Gegenwart, beschämt. Ihr erst so schö-
ner Puz verschwindet,
Da man des Lichtes Quelle selbst noch tausendmal so
herrlich findet.
Die sich nunmehr vermindert, verdünnend und
zertheilende Düste,

Das

Das sich nunmehr verschönernde, durch ihn gestärkte
Blau der Lüfte,
Der hohen Felsen äufre Spitzen, die prächtig in die
Höhe ragen,
Indem derselben äufre Rand, mit Himmels Gold,
als wie beschlagen,
Bemerken, selbst darüber freut, sein Ankniff. Bis
zuletzt die Wälder,
Und endlich auch die niedern Flächen der Meeres, Wie-
sen, Gärten, Felder,
Durch seinen schrägen Tracht beflößen, in güldnem
Glanz und Schimmer glühn,
Wodurch des Grases und der Blätter vorher schon
angenehmes Grün
Noch tausendmal veredelter wird, die Blumen noch
viel schöner blühn.

Nun glänget alles, was man sieht, Luft, Erde, Fel-
der, Thal und Hügel,
Absonderlich empfängt die Fluth, als ein polirter
Himmels-Spiegel,
Den hellen Glanz gedoppelt helle,
Es blüht nicht nur vom regen Schimmer ein jegliche
bewegte Welle,
Und suchet einen Fluß von Silber in Schuppen-
förmigen halben Kreisen,
In einer zitternden Bewegung, und schnellem Spielen
uns zu weisen;
Man siehet ihre glatte Flächen auf einer jeden stillen
Stelle,
Worinn im reinen Widerschein, als in geschliffene
Krystallen,
Die allerzierlichsten Figuren des Himmels und der
Erden fallen, Die

(Die ißt im hellen Sonnen-Strahl
Sich gleichsam überall vergulden)
Von aller schönen Creaturen so herrlichen Ori-
ginal,
Noch eine liebliche Copie, die Anmuth zu verdop-
peln, bilden.
Muß man bey so viel Herrlichkeiten denn fast ge-
zwungen nicht gestehn,
Zu ihres grossen Schöpfers Ehren, die Welt sey
wunderwürdig schön?
Und ist nicht jederman verpflichtet, mit Lust und
Dance sie anzusehn?

I.

The Spacious Firmament on high,
With all the blue Etherial Sky,
And spangled Heav'ns, a Shining Frame,
Their great Original proclaim:
Th' unwearied Sun, from Day to Day,
Does his Creator's Power display,
And publishes to every Land
The Work of an Almighty Hand.

II.

Soon as the Evening Shades prevail,
The Moon takes up the wondrous Tale,
And nightly to the listning Earth
Repeats the Story of her Birth:
Whilst all the Stars that round her burn,
And all the Planets in their turn,
Confirm the Tidings as they rowl,
And spread the Truth from Pole to Pole.

III.

What though, in solemn Silence, all
Move round the dark terrestrial Ball?
What tho' nor real Voice nor Sound
Amid their radiant Orbs be found?
In Reason's Ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious Voice,
For ever singing, as they shine,
'The Hand that made us is Divine.'

"The Spacious Firmament on high" concludes the
Spectator essay No. 465 in which Addison has been advocating
retirement to the country for meditation:

The Supream Being has made the best Arguments for his own Existence, in the Formation of the Heavens and the Earth, and these are Arguments which a Man of Sense cannot forbear attending to, who is out of the noise and Hurry of Human Affairs.

The beauty of the world is the best argument for the existence of God. Addison cites Aristotle's hypothetical case of a man who has lived underground; on seeing nature for the first time he would be forced to conclude from its beauty that there is a God. Addison then quotes the Psalmist: "The Heavens declare the Glory of God; And the Firmament sheweth his handy Work. One day telleth another: And one Night certifieth another." These words inspire "The Spacious Firmament" for "such a bold and sublime Manner of Thinking furnishes very noble Matter for an Ode."

The hymn itself and the ideas with which it is identified in Addison's essay¹ fit into the context which we have been studying. All of these ideas are found in Brockes' poetry also. Whether this particular essay supplied them or whether they were drawn from the general background it is impossible to determine.

The subject of retirement is exemplified in his "Hirten=Gedicht":²

Wie glücklich leben wir allhier! Da, so von Stadt, als
Hof, entfernt,

¹"Hof und Stadt" correspond to "courts and cities"; "Reitz der Leidenschaften" is similar to "cares and pleasures of the world." Brockes goes further than Addison in condemning the evils from which he wishes to escape (p. 161); the country is for Brockes a remnant of the Golden Age: "Entfernt von giftiger Verleumdung, Verfolgung, Undanck, Neid und Streit, / Erblickt man hier ein Ueberbleibsel der sonst verschwund'nen güld'nen Zeit."

²The full title is "Hirten=Gedicht. Als der grosse und gelehrte Fürst, Günther, zu Schwartzburg, Die Göttlichen Wunder, in Vermehrung des Getraides, von mir betrachtet, verlangte" (Metzler, pp. 158-173).

Man so von der Natur, als sich, was sonst nicht sicht-
bar, sehen lernet;
Da die Allgegenwärt'ge GÖttheit, in Wäldern, Feldern
und in Auen,
In Thieren, in den Elementen, ja im geringsten Kraut,
zu schauen.
Da man, vom Reitz der Leidenschaften befreyt, in Ruh'
und Musse, sich
Weit besser, als in Hof und Stadt, besieht, erkennet
und ergründet,
Und, in der Ruh' und Still', ein sonst umsonst gesucht
Vergnügen findet.

Brockes also writes a poem about the reaction of the man who had been brought up in darkness when he saw nature for the first time (Metzler, pp. 1-3). He would think the earth was heaven. William Fulton writes about this motif in connection with Cicero's De Natura Deorum in which it also occurs. The reader will remember that Cicero is important for our study of Brockes, since he transmitted many ideas from the ancients to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Fulton mentions

the inference to God from the order and beauty of the universe which is eloquently set forth in a well-known passage--reminiscent perhaps of Plato's story of the Cave--attributed to Aristotle in the dialogue On Philosophy, where is depicted the impression that would be made on a race of men whose dwellings had been underground, on their first beholding the glorious spectacle of earth and sea and sky.¹

"The spacious Firmament"² is based on the biblical text, "The Heavens declare the glory of God," which Addison found particularly sublime and which has inspired much of the work which we have reviewed so far. Its relationship to our background study is obvious--(1) nature demonstrates God's existence; (2) religion, especially as expressed in

¹William Fulton, Nature and God (Edinburgh, 1927), pp. 229-230.

²The text of this poem will be found in the Appendix along with other texts which will be discussed in this chapter.

Hebrew poetry, is sublime and is a worthy subject for poetic treatment; (3) the interest in science and its connection with God and nature is not apparent in this poem. Addison, despite his intense interest in science, has here depicted a pre-Copernican universe, for the planets still move round the earth. Brockes, whose poems are usually post-Copernican, has done the same thing. His editor considers it necessary to supply the following footnote to stanza 8 of "Die Sonne":

In dieser Strophe ist der Sonnen Aufgang, auf eine blosserding's Poetische Art, beschrieben; wie denn die alten Poeten durchgehends die Vorstellung hievon nicht anders gemacht, als daß die Sonne, bey ihrem Aufgange, aus dem Meer hervor stiege, woselbst sie des Nachts zuvor ausgeruhet hätte. Man findet nöthig, solches zu erinnern, weil der Herr Verfasser an andern Orten meistens der Meynung des Copernicus und anderer neueren so Natur= als Stern=Kündiger genau gefolget.

(Metzler, pp. 182-183)

Brockes uses the motif "one day telleth another" in several poems. Creation proclaims God's existence:

Sein Daseyn, Seine weise Liebe und Seine Grenzen=
lose Macht
Verkündiget ein Tag dem andern, und eine Nacht der
andern Nacht.

In this poem "Lob=Gedicht" (VIII, 7, Tübingen and Hamburg) Brockes, on an evening walk, looks at the mass of stars in the sky and rejoices in their revelation of God's presence. He prays:

Laß, von den Dich offenbarnden großen Werken, jetzt
mein Lallen,
Bloß aus väterlichem Lieben, Ewge Liebe! Dir
gefallen!

The same subject is found in another combination in the poem "Die uns zur Andacht reizende Vergnügen des Gehörs

im Frühlinge, in einem Sing=Gedichte" (Metzler, pp. 4-9). Since the whole of creation praises God, man should also follow its example. The whole of creation talks and sings of God:

Alles redet itzt und singet,
Alles tönet und erklinget,
Gott, von Deiner Wunder=Macht!
Wem ist itzt Dein Heyl verborgen?
Jeder Tag erzehlt's der Nacht,
Und die Nacht dem andern Morgen.

It is quite typical of much of Brockes' poetry that God's creatures talk to inattentive man. From great heavenly bodies to the smallest flower, all proclaim the glory of God. This is the subject of "Gottes Allgegenwart" (Metzler, pp. 531-532). It begins with a hymnic passage of ten lines--"Grosser GOTT! ich stehe stille,/Und erstaun'...." Whereever the poet goes, he hears and sees "mit Ergetzen" God's fullness, perfection and glory. He prays that he may continue to hear and see to the glory of God. There is a hymnic conclusion of four lines in which Brockes' doctrine of the senses is expressed:

So lasset uns künftig im Schmecken und Hören,
Nicht minder im Riechen, im Fühlen, im Sehn,
Den Schöpfer verehren,
Und Sein' Allgegenwart verstehn!

Between these passages are nine four-line stanzas in which the birds, winds, and brooks tell the same tale--"Ein GOTT ist hier." The poet reads and sees the same message in other parts of nature:

Wir können in Thälern, auf Bergen und Höhen,
In lieblicher Büsche beschatteten Pracht
Nichts deutlicher sehen:
Als: GOTT ist hier, der alles macht!

Wir sehn, wenn wir sehen beständig getrieben
So viele Planeten, den Himmel, die Welt,

In ihnen geschrieben;
Hier zeigt sich GOTT, der uns erhält!

The last stanza might sound rather out of place in a hymn, but it is an integral part of Brockes' religion:

Wenn niedliche Bissen uns Anmuth erwecken,
Und kühles Geträncke die Lippen uns netzt;
Kann jeder recht schmecken:
Wie freundlich GOTT, der uns ergetzt!

The only claim which the "Spacious Firmament" can make to the title of "hymn" is in the loose sense of a hymn to be sung in church (German "Kirchenlied"). The hymnic elements of apostrophe, prayer, thanksgiving and lists of divine attributes are absent. It resembles the majority of Brockes' poems in which creation itself proclaims the glory of God. Anyone who has attempted to find a clear classification of the ode and hymn at this period will agree with G.N. Shuster¹ that "no adequate definition of the ode has been established." Shuster's Introduction outlines the existing confusion in the eighteenth century itself and through the eyes of later critics. The odes which he discusses conform to his definition of the ode as a "hymnic poem derived...from Pindaric models" (p. 12) and do not concern our present subject, except for the brief mention of Addison's "Spacious Firmament." Shuster writes:

Addison's "The Spacious Firmament on High" was first published in the Spectator and there called an ode. It was also commonly referred to as a "hymn"; and since it happened to be--like many similar poems--a paraphrase of a Psalm, it was often called a "psalm." The composers who set it to music do not concur, Dr. Greene called it a "sacred ode" and others treating it as if it were a hymn.

A Companion to Magdalen Chapel lists its contents as "Hymns, Psalms, Odes and Anthems," giving Addison's poem as a "Psalm."

¹The English Ode from Milton to Keats (New York, 1940).

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Editions of the Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott

Hamburg edition

Vol. I appeared in 1721, 1724, 1726, 1728, 1732, 1737
and 1744.

Vol. II - 1727, 1730, 1734, 1739.

Vol. III - 1728, 1730, 1736, 1747.

Vol. IV - 1731, 1735, 1745.

Vol. V - 1736, 1740.

Vol. VI - 1739, 1740.

Vol. VII - 1743, 1748.

Vol. VIII - 1746.

Vol. IX - 1748.

Tübingen edition

Vols. I-VI - 1739, 1753.

Vol. VII - 1746.

Vols. VIII-IX - 1750.

Versuch vom Menschen, des Herrn Alexander Pope, Esq.
nebst verschiedenen andern Uebersetzungen und einigen
eigenen Gedichten. Hamburg, 1740.

Harmonische Himmelslust im Irdischen, oder auserlesene,
theils neue, theils aus dem Irdischen Vergnügen genomene,
und nach den 4 Jahreszeiten eingerichtete musicalische
Gedichte und Cantaten. Ed. B.H. Brockes, jun. Hamburg,
1741.

(Both volumes appear in one book in the British Museum
copy.)

Herrn Barthold Heinrich Brockes J.U.L. verteutschter
Bethlehemitischer Kinder-Mord des Ritters Marino. Nebst
etlichen von des Herrn Übersetzers eigenen Gedichten,
ans Licht gestellet, samt einer Vorrede von König.
Köln and Hamburg, 1715. Also Tübingen, 1753.

Brockes' Der für die Sünden der Welt gemarterte und
sterbende Jesus was printed with the Marino translation
and also separately.

Aus dem Englischen übersetzte Jahreszeiten des Herrn
Thomson zum Anhang des Irdischen Vergnügen in Gott.
Hamburg, 1745.

(These translations are published separately and also
as volumes X and XI of the Irdisches Vergnügen.)

Brockes' autobiography is edited by J.M. Lappenberg and
published in the Zeitschrift des Vereins für hamburgische
Geschichte, II, 167-229.

ANTHOLOGIES BASED ON THE IRD. VERG.

Some are very difficult to find and are really not worth troubling about. They were originally published in order to present the forgotten Brockes to the reading public. Nowadays the Reclam anthology serves this purpose. Facsimile reprints are becoming available for more serious study.

Brüggemann, Fritz (ed.). Das Weltbild der deutschen Aufklärung. Philosophische Grundlagen und Literarische Auswirkung: Leibniz, Wolff, Gottsched, Brockes, Haller. In: Deutsche Literatur. Sammlung Literarischer Kunst- und Kulturdenkmäler in Entwicklungsreihen, ed....Heinz Kindermann. Reihe Aufklärung. Vol. 2. Darmstadt, 1966.

This selection of poems is useful for those with no access to the original texts. The introduction concentrates on Brockes' utilitarianism and his optimistic belief in this world as the best of all worlds.

Delius, Rudolf von. Der Schöpfungsgarten, Gedichte... Hamburg, 1917.

-- Der Ring des Jahres. Stuttgart. (No year given).
The editor has rediscovered the beauty of Brockes' poetry which he eulogizes without discrimination or literary judgment in his introductions.

Elschenbroich, Adalbert (ed.). Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott. Universal-Bibliothek No. 2015. Reclam. Stuttgart, 1963.

Elschenbroich has selected 25 poems from volumes I, II, IV and VII of the Ird. Verg. which he presents in modern German. His "Nachwort" gathers together existing information as an introduction to Brockes' work. Although a certain amount of negative criticism remains, Elschenbroich recognizes that Brockes was an innovator, especially in his discovery of nature for German poetry. He also draws attention to the fact that Brockes precedes James Thomson in this respect. Brockes' poetry points to the future: "Am deutlichsten zeigt sich der Weg von der Naturbeschreibung zum Naturgefühl bei Klopstock."

Fraenger, W. (ed.). Ausgewählte Gedichte. Hannover, 1920.
A collection of about 46 poems.

Fulda, Ludwig (ed.). Die Gegner der zweiten Schlesischen Schule. 2 vols. Deut. Nat. Litt. Bde. 38-39. Berlin, 1886?

This volume contains an anthology of Brockes' poems with an introduction, but the choice of poems is determined by the editor's firm belief that Brockes' poems deteriorate with each volume (pp. 289, 290, 297). The "kindische innige Frömmigkeit" of the first two volumes is later destroyed "in schulmeisterlicher Kälte und in abenteuerlicher Geschmacklosigkeit." It is utilitarianism which later ruins his poetry: "er verwechselte am Ende gar die Schönheit mit der Zweckmäßigkeit und gelangte so zu einer seicht

utilitarischen Auffassung der Natur...." Fulda gives good biographical details and a short survey of contemporary criticism. He is the only writer to give an accurate list of the different editions of Brockes' work. His own attempts at literary criticism leave much to be desired.

Hagedorn, Friedrich von. Auszug der vornehmsten Gedichte aus dem Irdischen Vergnügen in Gott, Faksimiledruck nach der Ausgabe von 1738 mit einem Nachwort von Dietrich Bode. Reihe Texte des 18. Jahrhunderts, ed. Paul Böckmann. Stuttgart, 1965.

This is a facsimile reprint of a selection made by Hagedorn and Wilckens of poems from the first five volumes of the Ird. Verg.. As an indication of the taste of the time it is useful. The anthology includes some of the poems which are most interesting for the study of Brockes' poetry. Dietrich Bode's "Nachwort" summarizes the existing state of knowledge about Brockes. The bibliography is incomplete.

Raßmann, Friedrich, Deutsche Anthologie oder Blumenlese aus den Klassikern der Deutschen. Zwickau, 1824. Vol. XV.

This selection of about 16 poems with a short introduction is not very useful.

STUDIES ON BROCKES

The commentary in this section supplements what has already been written about studies on Brockes in the foregoing pages. It also draws attention to others which have not been mentioned. At this stage I did not consider it necessary to review or criticize these works, but merely to mention points of interest which concern the present study. Since many of these writings are almost unobtainable, the following notes might give a rough idea of their value and content.

Brandl, Alois. Barthold Heinrich Brockes. Nebst darauf bezüglichen Briefen von J.U. König und J.J. Bodmer. Innsbruck, 1878.

It is advisable to check factual information and literary judgments as they are frequently unreliable. The contents are: "Einleitung--Jugendjahre und akademische Reisen (1680-1704)--In Hamburg. Streben nach ansehnlicher Lebensstellung. Periode der italienischen Dichtungsart (1704-1715)--Auf dem Lande. Als Ratsherr auf der Reise nach Wien. Irdisches Vergnügen Bk. I. (1715-1723)--Oeffentliches und privates Leben. Die Dichtung als Lebensbeschreibung. Irdisches Vergnügen Bd. II-V (1724-1735)--Als Statthalter in Ritzebüttel. Letzte Lebensjahre in Hamburg. Irdisches Vergnügen Bd. VI-IX (1735-1747)--Stilistische Beobachtungen--Metrum." Several errors in circulation originated in this book, but it is mainly useful because it indicates available biographical material.

Breitinger, Johann Jacob. Critische Abhandlung von der Natur, den Absichten und dem Gebrauche der Gleichnisse. Faksimiledruck nach der Ausgabe von 1740. Nachwort von Manfred Windfuhr. Metzler, Stuttgart, 1967.

-- Critische Dichtkunst. Faksimiledruck nach der Ausgabe von 1740. Nachwort von Wolfgang Bender. 2 vols. Metzler, Stuttgart, 1966.
Breitinger praises and criticizes Brockes' poetry in several places throughout these books.

Colleville, Maurice. La Renaissance du lyrisme dans la poésie allemande au XVIII^e siècle, période préclassique. Paris, [1936].
Colleville devotes considerable space to Brockes, but does not refer to the background and sources. False judgments and errors result (above, pp. 210, 235, 350). He sees no contradiction in Brockes' different conceptions of God which he explains as stages in the evolution from a more orthodox idea to the conception of an omnipresent God who fills space ("une conception panthéiste"). For the most part Colleville summarizes Brockes' ideas in the Ird. Verg. and does not really give us a serious study.

- Deckelmann, Wilhelm. "Das Glaubensbekenntnis von B.H. Brockes." Zeitschrift des Vereins für hamburgische Geschichte (1936).
- Diamant, Friederike. Die Naturdichtung von Pope, Brockes und Haller. Ein Vergleich. Diss. Vienna, 1937. The three poets, Pope, Brockes and Haller, are discussed separately at first then compared at the end. In the section on Brockes the usual points are noted. In addition, the author appears to have noticed that Brockes is also a poet of the sublime, but there is no analysis or adequate discussion. When we are told that Brockes owes this to Milton, we can only suspect that the subtleties of the sublime have escaped her. Friederike Diamant also states that part of Brockes' originality springs from his successful assimilation of foreign influences, but she does not give further details. For English influences we are referred to earlier studies of no value. She disagrees with Manikowski's rejection of Leibniz' influence, but does not provide anything more convincing. She argues quite confidently that Brockes is a supporter of the old formal garden and the poem "Der Garten" is given as evidence. In this poem, Brockes is enthusiastic about man's cooperation with God to produce the beauty of the garden. When he rejoices in the beauty and harmony of nature, he is not thinking of the symmetry of the formal garden but of the order of the universe à la Newton.
- Gjerset, Knut. Der Einfluß von Thomsons Jahreszeiten auf die deutsche Literatur des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts. Heidelberg, 1898. The book is fairly interesting to read despite several errors, but a more thorough investigation of the subject is necessary. Occasionally Gjerset makes sweeping statements. He tells us that Nature for Brockes is subjective while objective for Thomson. This shows a disregard for the many strands which are combined in Brockes' treatment of nature.
- Gundolf, Friedrich. "Ein Gelegenheitsgedicht von Brockes." Sitzungsberichte der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Heidelberg. 1930-31.
- Hindrichson, Anna Gerhard. Bilder aus dem Leben der Familie Brockes in Ritzebüttel. Cuxhaven, 1907.
- Hindrichson, Georg. Brockes und das Amt Ritzebüttel 1735-1741. Cuxhaven, 1897-1899.
- Janssen, Otto. Naturempfindung und Naturgefühl bei Barthold Heinrich Brockes in dem "Irdischen Vergnügen in Gott." Diss. Bonn, 1907. Above, pp. 263-269, 272-273.

Jantz, Harold. "Brockes' Poetic Apprenticeship," MLN, LXXVII (1962), pp.439-442.

Jantz briefly discusses Brockes' earlier work and maintains that, with the translation of Marino, Brockes had served his poetic apprenticeship. He then rejects some Myths about Brockes' Ird. Verg. especially the supposed poetic decline in the later volumes. The article is really an attempt to rehabilitate the maligned Brockes; Jantz points out that Brockes has written more good poems than is generally supposed, poems of which any poet before Goethe could be proud.

Junker, Christof. Das Weltraumbild in der deutschen Lyrik von Opitz bis Klopstock. Germanische Studien, Hft. 111.

An interesting study of the infiltration of the new astronomical ideas into German poetry. Brockes is the first to use the new attitude to space as a poetic subject, especially in his earlier poetry. According to Junker's statistics, the frequency diminishes with subsequent volumes of the Ird. Verg. Theological ideas and imagery are influenced by the new astronomy. Junker compares the treatment of space in the poetry of Brockes and Klopstock.

Koch, Max. Über die Beziehungen der englischen Literatur zur deutschen im achtzehnten Jahrhundert. Leipzig, 1883.

This book is given in Körner's bibliography, but it is quite useless. It dwells on Brockes' ludicrous utilitarian poetry and spreads the idea that Thomson influenced Brockes.

Krogman, Willy. "Ein Brockes zugeschriebenes Gedicht." Deutsche Philologie, Bd. 76, Heft 4.

Krogman maintains that the poem "Gedanken über den Gottesdienst der Juden im Alten und der Christen im neuen Testament" is not by Brockes as is believed by Fulda and Deckelmann.

Kupffer, Imogen. Das Irdische Vergnügen in Gott von B.H.Brockes. Eine Untersuchung zu Wesen und Entwicklung der Naturlyrik. Unpublished thesis. Göttingen, 1956.

Imogen Kupffer discusses the question of Brockes' sources without making any definite contribution, as her aim is to trace the development from baroque and "Aufklärung" to "Naturlyrik." She compares poems from the German baroque with some by Brockes and also gives tables and statistics on Brockes' use of comparisons. Although Brockes' poems are closely related to a religious idea or moral, she sees in some poems the beginnings of secularization and in others "Naturlyrik." (Above, pp. 391-393, 252, 357)

Löffelholz, Franz. Wirklichkeitserlebnis und Gottesvorstellung in B.H. Brockes' "Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott". Diss. Frankfurt a. M., 1955. Löffelholz makes some very good points, but the value of many is lost since he gives little or no evidence. Since most of the literature on Brockes specializes in similar statements which turn out to be inaccurate, such a method is suspect. Some of his ideas are in fact correct -- Brockes' connection with Derham, the atomists, the Cambridge Platonists and Locke -- but they are not developed. His criticism of those who associate the Ird. Verg. with pietism and mysticism is much better. As for his own thesis, he would have seen many things in perspective if he had gone deeper into Brockes' sources, but he does not always consider this necessary as one of his footnotes tells us: "Die Frage nach den 'Einflüssen' tritt für uns völlig zurück. Das Begriffliche im Ird. V. ist ihm [Brockes] zumeist von außen zugeflossen. Bedeutsam ist allein die Auswahl und die Weise der Wiedererlebung bei der die erlebte Wirklichkeit der Welt in ganz neuer Eindringlichkeit mitspielt" (p.73). He treats Brockes' poetry as a confession of true experience and interprets some poems as one would interpret Goethe's poetry. The discussion of books dealing with Brockes is quite comprehensive and presents different viewpoints from those which have been emphasized in this study.

Lohmeyer, Karl. "Der Ratsherr B.H. Brockes (1680-1747) als politischer Dichter," Hamburger Geschichts- und Heimatblätter, X (1937).

Mainland, William F. "Brockes and the limitations of imitation," Reality and Creative Vision in German Lyrical Poetry, ed. August Closs. (Proceedings of the Fifteenth Symposium of the Colston Research Society...). London, 1963, 101-116. This essay, according to Mainland, is concerned with: "the patterned variety of the poet's work; the limits fixed by his personality, his intention and the epoch upon the manner of his observation and the idiom of his response: and the shifting limits of appreciation in later times." He gives three reasons for our neglect of Brockes: "the laborious, pedestrian nature of some of his verse...The second is Lessing's essay on the demarcation of the arts, Laocoon, which was held a little too long as a canon of taste instead of being regarded merely as remedial in its own time. The third is the promotion of the poet Günther in Goethe's retrospect on his own poetic education." He notes most of the important aspects of Brockes' work (without the context)

and is the first to attempt to answer the important question of Brockes' inequalities (above, p. 392). Brockes is seen as "the amateur scholar, limited by the zeal of his age to clarify and explain, at other times as precursor of poets in the romantic age, lost in a wonder more confused than his and murmuring in melancholy amazement: 'unaussprechlich, geheimnisvoll'."

Manikowski, Fritz von. Die Welt- und Lebensanschauung in dem "Irdischen Vergnügen in Gott" von Barthold Heinrich Brockes. Diss. Greifswald, 1914. Manikowski attempts to discover in Brockes' Irdisches Vergnügen a unified system of thought, but is puzzled by various inconsistencies. Brockes' conception of God gives most trouble: "Er betont hier ganz besonders die Allgegenwart der Gottheit, und dennoch spielt wieder die biblische Vorstellung von einem Jenseits herein und droht die klare Anschauung zu trüben. Aber wir erkennen deutlich, daß es sich hier eben nur noch um ein leises Nachwirken alter Tradition handelt, dem gegenüber sich ein neuer Geist langsam zu behaupten sucht." Some pages later Manikowski offers another explanation: "Meines Erachtens kommt hier zweifellos die panentheistische Richtung in Frage, die in ihren Ideen eine Verschmelzung theistischer und pantheistischer Gesichtspunkte darstellt." He finds that Brockes' religious ideas have more in common with Shaftesbury than Leibniz. He is responsible for the statement that Brockes had read Shaftesbury's works with enthusiasm (above, p. 225). Despite external influences, Brockes has worked out his own attitude to God and the world: "Hier und dort erkennen wir, daß seine Auffassung in vieler Hinsicht von den Ideen und Anschauungen seiner Zeit beeinflußt worden ist, doch nur soweit, daß das Gesamtbild seiner Anschauung von Gott und Welt auf uns immer noch den Eindruck einer durchaus selbst durchdachten und innerliche eigenen Ideenwelt macht. Zugrunde liegt die protestantisch-kirchliche Anschauung. Die Philosophie der Zeit übt auf sie ihre Einwirkung aus und gibt ihr eine leise panentheistische Färbung" (p. 68).

Müller, Andreas. Landschaftserlebnis und Landschaftsbild: Studien zur deutschen Dichtung des 18. Jahrhunderts und der Romantik. [Stuttgart] 1955. This book is mentioned in some bibliographies on Brockes, but Brockes shares a short chapter with Haller. Müller points out that since Lessing referred to Haller rather than to Brockes in his Laocoon Brockes tends to be considered as less important. The book contributes nothing new to the subject of Brockes. Müller emphasizes that Brockes' poems are not all didactic; many are "neuartig," "Darstellungen von Anmut und Grazie."

Pfeiffer, Johannes. "Über ein Gedicht von Barthold Heinrich Brockes 'Mondschein'" in Sammlung, 3, 1948, pp. 391-395.

Pfund, Harry W. Studien zu Wort und Stil bei Brockes. New York, 1935.

Pfund discusses various aspects of Brockes' style and gives numerous illustrations. He tells us, for instance, that Brockes makes frequent use of apostrophe, and he quotes from Brockes' Shaftesbury poem without realizing its origin. He sometimes makes statements which he does not substantiate. Brockes' work, we are told, declines with the passing years. His habit of quoting out of context is misleading. For instance, one is led to believe from the following quotation that Brockes considers the world as a vale of tears: "Die Welt ist ein rechtes Thränen=Thal,/Das Unglücks=Disteln, Sorgen=Hecken und Schmertzens=Dornen, gantz bedecken" (I,399; Pfund, p. 37). In the poem from which this is taken, "Der Ursprung des menschlichen Unvergnügens, bey dem Anfange des 1720sten Jahres," Brockes totally rejects this view and maintains that such discontent is caused by pride.

Price, Lawrence Marsden. Die Aufnahme englischer Literatur in Deutschland 1500-1960. Bern, 1961.

There is a section on Brockes, but the main concern is the relationship between Brockes and Thomson. Price correlates existing studies. Since the scope of his book is vast, he is obviously not in a position to check every detail personally. Consequently a few errors are passed on to readers (above, pp. 225, 251-2). The existing studies on the question of Thomson's influence on German literature reveal the need for a more thorough investigation of this subject.

Reininger, Anton. Natur als Gehalt der Lyrik von Brockes bis Heine. Diss. Vienna, 1966.

A thesis covering a period of 130 years cannot be expected to deal with Brockes in any detail. The section on Brockes, "Natur als Objekt der Beschreibung," emphasizes the almost scientific exactness of much of the description which is an obstacle to "Stimmung." A love of nature and religious sentiments come through. Brockes sometimes goes beyond precise description and produces "Konfigurationen von nahezu abstraktem Reiz." Other writers on Brockes, attempting to explain the inconsistencies, have found in the Ird. Verg. some kind of evolution or decline: Müller sees unprogressive uniformity: "Sein Werk kennt kaum eine Entwicklung, vieles wiederholt sich, das Verfahren ist immer das gleiche."

Rosenhagen, Gustav. "Wörter und Wort beim alten Dichter Brockes," Festschrift von Melle. Hamburg, 1933, 148-159.

This essay begins with linguistic issues such as Brockes' use of dialect words. When Rosenhagen indulges in literary criticism, he misses most points. Brockes' love of nature stems from reason. His endless descriptions are soulless: "Die Seele gewann keine Macht über sie. Er konnte sie weder mit einem ganzen Gefühl erfassen noch die Gefühle als Ganzes sichtbar oder fühlbar machen, obwohl ihm die äußere Sinnenwelt und Sinnesfähigkeit so unablässig trieb." He sees little merit in a fairly good poem "Die Nachtigall" (Metzler 27-29) since it has no unity. Some of Brockes' poems were set to music, but "seine Texte sangen nicht, obwohl ihm der Sinn voll war von Gesang und dem was die Seele klingen läßt." All Brockes did was to describe, and in this he was severely limited by the language of his time.

Strauß, David Friedrich. Gesammelte Schriften ...12 vols. Bonn, 1876-1877.

Strauß is responsible for the idea that the Ird. Verg. is "ein gereimter physico-theologischer Beweis" (above, pp. 2-3, 52).

Stewart, Morton Collins. "Barthold Heinrich Brockes' Rendering of Thomson's Seasons and the later German Translations," JEGP, X (1911), 20-41 and 378-414.

Stewart discusses the merits and demerits of Brockes' translation of the Seasons. On the whole, Brockes renders the meaning of the original fairly well except for occasional omissions and additions. There are also some mistakes where Brockes has not understood the text. The translation is much longer, as Brockes changes adjectives into clauses, and repeats ideas in different ways. Stewart thinks that the standard has generally been lowered. He endorses Brandl's view that vol. VII. of the Ird. Verg. improved through Thomson's influence (above, p. 6). It is interesting in these articles to read how different writers (Bodmer, Gottsched, Gleim, Uz, Gessner, Herder, Wieland and Schlegel) judged Brockes' translation. Later translations of the Seasons are also discussed.

Tieghem, Paul van. Le sentiment de la Nature dans le Prérromantisme Européen. Paris, 1960.
Above, pp. 282-291.

Vontobel, Willy. Von Brockes bis Herder. Studien über die
Lehrdichter des 18. Jahrhunderts. Bern, [1942].

The section on Brockes in this book draws attention to the usual picture of the Philistine concerned with his own security, the didactic poet explaining away evil since this is the best of all worlds, and the "Sinnenmensch" whose religion consists of enjoyment of the world.

Wolff, Hans M. "Brockes Religion," PMLA, LXII (1947), 1124-1152.

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Die Weltanschauung der deutschen Aufklärung
in geschichtlicher Entwicklung. Bern, 1949.

A wider knowledge of sources and background would have produced a more valuable study.

Wolff tries to compare Brockes' theology with Lutheranism, but sees that the "sinnlicher Gottesdienst" goes much further (above, p. 63). To a certain extent, Brockes has been influenced by Arndt (above, pp. 22, 59, 345). Löffelholz has discussed Wolff's ideas in detail and criticized them.

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